THE RELIGIOUS TEACHING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ALBERT C. KNUDSON

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The Religious Teaching of the Old Testament

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A FAITHFUL MINISTER OF
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PREFACE

In this exposition of the religious teaching of the Old Testament I have adopted the topical method as best calculated to meet the needs of the preacher and general Bible student. This method presupposes some acquaintance with the religious history of Israel taken as a whole. The first chapter is consequently devoted to a brief outline of the development of Old Testament religion and literature.

The aim of the book is to give an account of the origin and development of the leading religious ideas of the Old Testament. Incidentally, the effort has been made to relate these ideas to modern thought. Controverted questions have been made subordinate, but it has not been possible to avoid them altogether. Scholars are generally agreed on the history of religious thought in Israel after the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. But with reference to earlier times, especially the preprophetic period, considerable difference of opinion still prevails. It is the contention of this book that the literary prophets were not, in the proper sense of the term, the "creators of ethical monotheism." The higher faith of Israel may be traced back into the preprophetic period. Indeed, its germ is to be found in the teaching of Moses. As regards two points in particular—the history of the Messianic hope and the place of the individual in early Israel—the view held by many modern scholars is in need of revision. To these subjects consequently special attention has been given.

The traditional form of the divine name "Jehovah"

is the one still in general use. But the more correct form, Yahwe(h) or Jahve(h), is almost universally employed among scholars (see pages 54f.), and it is only a question of time when it will come into general use. Hence I have adopted it, though not without some hesitancy, in all cases except in the biblical quotations, where I have followed the text of the American Revised Version.

My special thanks are due the Rev. Elmer A. Leslie, Ph.D., for the painstaking care with which he has gone through the manuscript, verifying references and making numerous helpful suggestions and criticisms. I wish also to thank Professor Edgar S. Brightman, Ph.D., for the privilege of using the advance sheets of his valuable work on the Sources of the Hexateuch.

ALBERT C. KNUDSON.

I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

OUTLINE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF OLD TESTAMENT RELIGION AND LITERATURE

It is only in comparatively recent times that the idea of development has been applied in a thoroughgoing way to human history. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there were four distinguished thinkers, namely, Bodin (1530-96), Bacon (1561-1626), Descartes (1596-1650), and Pascal (1623-62), who formulated "the general fact of progress in language so striking that it could no longer be overlooked." [1] And in the early part of the eighteenth century the Italian jurist Vico (1668-1744) made the theory of man's gradual development out of a barbaric state basal in the science of history. But the principles he laid down did not come to be fully appreciated until almost a century later; so that it is only during the past hundred years that the idea of evolution has been employed in a strictly scientific way in the reconstruction of ancient history.

Two principles are involved in the evolutionary conception of history. One may be called the *naturalistic,* the other the *psychological.* Both were stressed by Vico. In the dominant philosophy of history before his time, that represented by Augustine's City of God and Bossuet's "Discourse on Universal History," Providence was

[1] Robert Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History,* p. 104.

made the central and controlling factor in human history. The rise and fall of nations was ascribed to divine intervention, and so also the development of each particular people. God was represented as everywhere the efficient cause in human affairs. But this idea, however true it may be, was not fitted to serve as the working basis of a scientifically written history. For Providence is a matter of faith, not of observation. It is not one among a number of causes operative in human history, but the sole ultimate cause in whose existence theists believe. It does not stand opposed to what is sometimes called secondary causes, but works in and through them. In any case what we see when we observe and study human history is certain human forces and motives at work. These forces and motives are as varied as human nature. They grow out of physical need, out of ambition, passion, and the higher aspirations of men. But they are not aimless or lawless. They operate in certain regular ways, and the function of the historian is to ascertain what these laws are, and then apply them to the reconstruction of the past. It was this naturalistic principle that Vico put in the place of Augustine's and Bossuet's Providence. In so doing he did not, however, deny the fact of Providence. He accepted it, but interpreted it in a profounder way, looking upon God as immanent in human history rather than external to it.

The psychological principle laid down by Vico emphasizes the importance of our interpreting primitive men from their own point of view. "All our errors," he held, "in explaining the origin of human society arise from our obstinacy in believing that primitive man was entirely similar to ourselves, who are civilized, i.e., developed by the results of a lengthy process of anterior historic evolu-

tion. We must learn to issue from ourselves, transport ourselves back to other times, and become children again in order to comprehend the infancy of the human race. As in children, imagination and the senses prevailed in those men of the past. They had no abstract ideas; in their minds all was concrete, visible, tangible. All the phenomena, forces, and laws of nature, together with mental conceptions, were alike personified. To suppose that all mythical stories are fables invented by the philosophers is to write history backwards, and confound the instinctive, impersonal, poetic wisdom of the earliest times with the civilized, rational, and abstract occult wisdom of our own day." [2] It was this mistake that the eighteenth-century historians, such as Hume and Gibbon, made. They rejected the Augustinian idea of Providence, but put no constructive principle in its place. They failed to grasp the conception of growth or development. For them it was difficult to conceive of men as living and thinking under conditions quite different from those with which they themselves were familiar, and hence they were unable to arrive at a true understanding of the past. Not until the dawn of the nineteenth century did historians begin to appreciate the psychological principle laid down by Vico, and to enter more sympathetically into the thought-life of the ancient world.

When these two principles, the naturalistic and psychological, implicit in the evolutionary conception of history, were applied in a thoroughgoing way to ancient history, as for example, by Niebuhr to Rome, they led to important modifications of the views that had hitherto been current. But so long as their application was confined to "profane" history, no serious difficulty arose. It

[2] *Encyclopædia Britannica,* vol. xxviii, p. 24.

was generally admitted that in the "natural" sphere they were valid. When, however, they came to be applied to "sacred" history, the situation was different. Here they ran counter to long-established beliefs and deep-seated convictions. Vico had regarded Hebrew history as *sui generis,* and this was the common belief. But when the naturalistic principle was applied to the Bible, the sharp distinction hitherto drawn between the "sacred" and "profane" was obliterated. The effort was now made to write a history of the Hebrews similar to that of the Romans. Little or no account was taken of supernatural factors. The miraculous revelations and interventions that seemed to be characteristic of Israel's history were ascribed to "Oriental" or "primitive" habits of thought and expression. They were not in the proper sense of the term historical facts; yet they were not due to fraud, as was claimed by the unbelievers of the eighteenth century. They, rather, owed their peculiar character to the Oriental type of speech or to the myth-making tendency of the ancient mind. In any case the attempt was made to interpret the history of Israel so far as possible as a natural development; and this resulted in a somewhat radical modification of the traditional views relative to the origin and history of Old Testament religion and literature.

Against this tendency there was naturally a vigorous protest. A long controversy ensued. The advocates of the new view were regarded as "unbelievers"; and many of them were such. But that this was the case, we now see, is not strange. "There are manifest reasons why the critical movement should originate, and for a time be prosecuted outside of the circles dominated by an earnest Christian faith. For one thing, only there could the

necessary freedom be found. For ages Christian piety had been so intimately bound up with certain views concerning the origin of the Scriptures that its very existence seemed to be involved in the maintenance of those views. Any attempt, then, at their revision, in quarters where religious conviction was strong, would necessarily have met with strenuous opposition. Again, the impulse to such revision was primarily intellectual. The men who engaged in it were, most of them, moved by a passion for knowledge rather than religion. And such men under modern conditions of life naturally found the extra-ecclesiastical atmosphere more congenial. There knowledge might be pursued for its own sake, regardless of consequences. Furthermore, the stress on the natural, as opposed to the miraculous, which underlies modern criticism, was necessarily at the outset more or less repugnant to religious minds. To treat the Bible as one does other books seemed, at first, sacrilegious." [3]

But this feeling gradually gave way. Men began to see that there is no necessary antithesis between the "natural" and the "supernatural," that God is immanent in the world, and that the "natural" is only the ordinary way in which God works. What happens in a natural way may be as direct an expression of the divine will as a miracle. It is not necessary that the Bible should have been miraculously dictated to men in order to be accepted as "the word of God." Indeed, the great fact of the creative or constitutive activity of thought, first made clear to us by Immanuel Kant, renders such a method of revelation inherently improbable. The human mind is not the

[3] See the author's article on "The Philosophy and Theology of the Leading Old Testament Critics," in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1912, pp. 1-21.

passive recipient of a ready-made knowledge. It receives from without certain stimuli, and then out of them builds up for itself its own world. In the case, then, of "revealed" truth what we should expect is that certain impulses from the Divine Spirit would impinge upon the human mind, and that these would then be worked up in harmony with the mind's own laws and translated into the concrete messages of the prophets. In this process much that is distinctively human would necessarily intermingle with the divine, and there would be in the process itself nothing essentially different from that observed in the composition of other books. The Bible, we should consequently expect, would be a book or collection of books to be studied just as other books are. It would not be inerrant. Its origin and development would be subject to the same laws as those operative in the literature of any people.

Furthermore, it has become increasingly clear since the time of Kant that logical demonstration is impossible in the field of objective knowledge, and that in the religious realm the final test of truth is not to be found in any absolute objective authority, whether church or Bible, but in experience. If the Bible finds us at greater depths of our being than any other book, if it enriches our lives and inspires us to heroic service, if it makes God real to us, we have in that fact a sufficient evidence of its inspiration. We need no doctrine of infallibility to assure us of its truth. Nor is it, from this point of view, a matter of concern to us that there is much, especially in the earlier parts of the Bible, that seems to us crude and obsolete. In any historical movement the important thing is the outcome and not what it came out of. By its fruits we must judge it, not by its roots. This pragmatic test

of truth, together with the idea of the divine immanence and that of the constitutive activity of the human mind, has so modified Christian thought during the past century that the older fear of the "critical" and evolutionary conception of Scripture has largely vanished. It is now seen that there is nothing in what may be termed the modern view of the Bible that is necessarily inconsistent with the historic Christian faith.[4]

But the acceptance of the evolutionary view of the Old Testament does not necessarily carry with it any specific reconstruction of the history of Old Testament religion and literature. Indeed, the evolutionary idea appears to some extent in the Bible itself, especially in the work of the priestly contributor to the Pentateuch. "The ordered and schematic arrangement of this author's creation story," says H. P. Smith, "made him, in a sense, the first of the evolutionists, and his theory of development comes to view in his treatment of the institutions of Israel. The Sabbath was introduced at the beginning; at the Deluge the prohibition of blood as food was imposed; at the birth of Isaac circumcision was commanded; and at the exodus the observance of the passover." [5] The idea of a progressive revelation appears also in the author's theory concerning the divine names. Before Abraham the name of God was *Elohim* or *El;*[6] in the patriarchal age he was known as El Shaddai;[7] and to Moses he revealed himself as Yahweh.[8] We further find the idea of development in Paul's conception of the Old Testament dispensation as

[4] For a more extended discussion of this subject see the author's article on "The Evolution of Modern Bible Study," in the *Methodist Review*, 1911, pp. 899-910.

[5] *The Religion of Israel*, pp. 229f.

[6] Gen. 1.

[7] Gen. 17. 1.

[8] Exod. 6. 2-3.

a preparatory and partial one. The Law was a tutor to bring us to Christ.[9] Not until "the fullness of time" did Christ come.[10] These facts show that a kind of evolution was recognized by some of the biblical writers themselves. And to this it may be added that some of the modern exponents of evolution, such as Bruno Bauer, have applied their theory to the Old Testament in such a way as to involve no serious modification of the traditional view as to its origin and history. The bare idea of development does not, then, necessarily imply any particular scheme of historical reconstruction. The problem in each case must be solved, not by *a priori* considerations, but by a careful critical study of the data involved.

There are, however, as we have seen, certain principles implicit in the idea of evolution; and these principles, when applied in a consistent and thoroughgoing way, have led to important modifications of the traditional view relative to the Old Testament. The most important of these modifications has to do with the date when the higher religious ideas of the Old Testament were first expressed, and its elaborate ritualistic and ecclesiastical system formulated. According to tradition, the ritualistic and ecclesiastical system as embodied in the Law owed its origin to Moses; and the higher religious ideas of the Old Covenant, such as the unity of God, his creatorship, righteousness, and grace were more ancient still. We find them with Abraham; indeed, our first parents are represented as monotheists. But, leaving out of account the pre-Mosaic age, the question arises as to whether it is probable that Israel's religion came into being full-fledged at the very beginning of the na-

[9] Gal. 3. 24.
[10] Gal. 4. 4.

tion's history. Is it probable that such an elaborate ecclesiastical system as that found in the Pentateuch was formulated by Moses, and that the lofty ideas of the divine nature and character there expressed came from him? The analogy of other peoples points strongly to a later date. So complete a system of religious belief and practice as we find in the Law would certainly most naturally appear at the end of a long period of development rather than at the very birth of the nation. The people in Moses' time were not prepared for such an elaborate and highly developed system. The very conditions of their life would have made it impracticable. And when we turn to the subsequent history of Israel, the period of the Judges and the Monarchy, we find no evidence that the Levitical system was in vogue among the people. The assumption of the Mosaic origin of the Law throws no light on the historical and prophetic books. "On the contrary," says Wellhausen, "my enjoyment of the latter was marred by the Law; it did not bring them any nearer me, but intruded itself uneasily, like a ghost that makes a noise indeed, but is not visible and really effects nothing." [11] "Did ye," says Amos, "bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" [12] "I spake not," says Jeremiah, "unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices." [13] Evidently, these prophets and the people of their day knew nothing of an extended ritual law attributed to Moses. This law, it would seem, must have come from a later date, probably from the time of Ezra

[11] *History of Israel*, p. 3.
[12] 5. 25.
[13] 7. 22.

and Nehemiah. There is also no evidence that the higher religious ideas of the Pentateuch were current among the early Israelites. These ideas seem to have been first clearly expressed by the eighth-century prophets.

There are thus three periods that may be distinguished in the religious history of Israel. The rise of literary prophecy marks the end of the first and the beginning of the second; and the introduction of the Priestly Law marks the end of the second and the beginning of the third. The first is commonly known as the *preprophetic* period; it extended from about B. C. 1200 to B. C. 750. The second is the *prophetic* period; it covered three centuries, from B. C. 750 to B. C. 450. The third may be called the *legalistic* or *levitical* period; it also covered about three centuries, extending from B. C. 450 to the close of Old Testament history, which may be placed at B. C. 150 or 100.

The assignment of the Priestly Law to the fifth century B. C. does not mean that the whole Pentateuch was written at that time. Scholars are now quite generally agreed that the Pentateuch is a composite work, that it is made up of four main documents. Two of these were written in the preprophetic period, the third in the prophetic, and the fourth at the beginning of the legalistic period. The first two are commonly designated by the symbols, J and E, J standing for Jehovistic and E for Elohistic. This nomenclature is due to the fact that the J document uses the name "Jehovah" or "Yahweh" from the beginning, while the E document does not introduce the name "Jehovah" until the time of Moses,[14] using instead the Hebrew word for "God," *Elohim*. To J "is referred about a half of Genesis, a sixth of Exodus, a

[14] Exod. 3. 13-15.

fifteenth of Numbers, and a few verses in Deuteronomy." E "is credited with having furnished more than a fourth of Genesis and Exodus, about a ninth of Numbers, and . . . a few verses of Deuteronomy." The third document is known as D or the Deuteronomic. It originated in the seventh century B. C., and is now incorporated in Deuteronomy. How much of the present book of Deuteronomy belonged to the original D document is a question on which scholars are divided. Most of chapters 5-26 is commonly assigned to it, and it may also have included portions of the rest of the book. The fourth document is commonly known as P or the Priestly document. It forms the framework of the Pentateuch, and includes "about a fifth of Genesis, nearly a half of Exodus, the whole of Leviticus, nearly three fourths of Numbers, and a few verses in Deuteronomy." With reference to the dates of these different documents and their union in the Pentateuch, Professor H. G. Mitchell makes the compact and representative statement, "that J originated about 850, and E about B. C. 800; that the two, having been more or less revised and enlarged, were united into a composite document before B. C. 639; that D, which was discovered in B. C. 621, but must have been written some time before and revised in the reign of Manasseh, was incorporated with JE early in the Captivity; and that the Pentateuch was practically completed by the addition of P, a product of the first half of the fifth century B. C., before 444, if not before 458, the date of Ezra's appearance in Palestine." [15]

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[15] *The World Before Abraham,* p. 63. The other quotations in the above paragraph are also taken from this work, which contains an excellent introduction to the *Pentateuch* (pp. 1-67). See also *The Books of the Pentateuch,* by F. C. Eiselen. The text of the J, E,

The late date of the larger part of the Pentateuch and the view that the higher religious ideas of the Old Testament were first clearly expressed by the eighth-century prophets, carry with them the conclusion that the Psalms and Wisdom Books (Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes) were also of comparatively late date, for these books, like the Pentateuch, presuppose the work of the literary prophets. The book of Psalms was not written by David, as was formerly supposed. It was the songbook of the second temple, and most of the individual psalms were written after the exile. Indeed, the question has been raised as to whether there are any preexilic psalms in the collection. Proverbs and Ecclesiastes were not the work of Solomon, but came from the postexilic period; and Job instead of being the oldest book of the Bible probably dates from the fourth century B. C.

These general modifications of the traditional view relative to the history of the Old Testament religion and literature have been accepted by most modern scholars; but there are still considerable differences of opinion concerning the dates of particular portions of the Old Testament, and concerning the character of the religious life and beliefs of the Israelites during the preexilic and especially the preprophetic period. Some critics are inclined to minimize the work of Moses and to reduce the preprophetic religion of Israel to the plane of a nature religion. This is due in large part to a mistaken application of the principle of evolution. Evolution is interpreted either from the standpoint of biology or from that of the

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and P documents is presented in a convenient form and with admirable introductions in *The Sources of the Hexateuch,* by Edgar S. Brightman.

Hegelian philosophy. In biology evolution is supposed to be a slow but more or less steady upward movement, and so it is argued that the rather crude religious ideas and practices of the period of the Judges preclude a distinctly higher conception of religion on the part of Moses. If there was in the time of the Judges no distinct bond between morals and religion, there could have been no such bond in the earlier Mosaic period. In the Hegelian philosophy, on the other hand, evolution is regarded as a kind of logical process, a dialectic of thought. *Thesis* gives rise to *antithesis,* and these two then unite in a higher *synthesis.* This triadic dialectic, as applied to Old Testament religion, made the *naturalism* of the preprophetic period the thesis, the *moral idealism* of the prophets the antithesis, and the *legalism* of the postexilic priests the synthesis. "In old times," as Wellhausen says, "the nation had been the ideal of religion in actual realization; the prophets confronted the nation with an ideal to which it did not correspond. Then to bridge over this interval the abstract ideal was framed into a law, and to this law the nation was to be conformed."

This conception of the religious development of Israel is a suggestive one, and contains much truth. But when applied in a thoroughgoing way it leads to an abstract and one-sided conception of the different periods of Israel's history. The preprophetic period, for instance, is reduced to a dead level of naturalism. "The relation of Yahweh to Israel," says Wellhausen, "was in its nature and origin a natural one; there was no interval between him and his people to call for thought or question. Only when the existence of Israel had come to be threatened by the Syrians and Assyrians, did such prophets as Elijah

and Amos raise the Deity high above the people, sever the natural bond between them, and put in its place a relation depending on conditions, conditions of a moral character." [16] This implies that Moses contributed nothing of a distinctly ethical character to the religion of Israel. Before this higher factor could appear, the prophetic *antithesis* must have asserted itself. Utterances, consequently, such as the Decalogue, which involve an ethical conception of religion, cannot have come from the Mosaic or preprophetic period. Between the prophetic and preprophetic religion there was a wide gulf. The very antithesis between the natural and the ethical implies this. But life itself is always too complex to fit into any such logical straitjacket. No period is completely dominated by any one conception. The forces operative in the prophetic period had their precursors in the preprophetic, and it is unwarranted to draw a hard-and-fast line between the two.

It is a defect both of the biological and the Hegelian conception of human evolution that they do not accord a sufficiently important place to the personal factor. In the one case a mysterious necessity inherent in human nature, and in the other a kind of dialectic of thought, provides the moving force in human development. These forces work through individuals but are superior to them, using them simply as instruments. History is consequently a steady forward movement, so that the insight of one age may be tested by that of the succeeding age. But this conception of history is manifestly untrue to the facts of life. Conditions during the period of the Judges do not necessarily furnish a test of what the teaching of Moses was. "History," as Toy says, "proceeds by crisis, and a crisis

[16] *History of Israel*, pp. 491, 417.

implies a great man," [17] who is far ahead of his age. "Those," says Kautzsch, "who recognize everywhere simply development in a straight line from crude or at least naïve naturalism to more and more purified moral conceptions, quite overlook the circumstance that their contention is opposed by demonstrably historical facts. Epochmaking religious ideas generally come upon the scene in full strength and purity; it is only in course of further development that these products of religious creative genius, or, better, of divine impulse, are corrupted and disfigured by the intrusion of vulgar human ideas and selfish interests. Such was the fate of the religion of Jesus Christ in the Roman Church with its popes and monks; and the same thing happened to many of the great fundamental ideas of the Reformation at the hands of Protestant scholasticism. And we are quite safe to assume something of the same kind in the process of the development of Yahwism. The great fundamental ideas upon which its institution rests were often forced into the background during the wandering period of the people's history and in the time of endless struggles for national existence under the Judges. . . . But they did not die out, and when, in the eighth century B. C., they were put forward by Amos and others with the greatest clearness and precision and urged upon the conscience of the people, these prophets had a perfect right to claim that they were making no new and unheard-of demands, but only proclaiming what from Sinai downward had been recognized as facts." [18]

The prophets are, then, to be regarded not as inno-

[17] *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 21.

[18] "The Religion of Israel," in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. v, p. 632.

vators, but as reformers.[19] For the source of Israel's higher faith we must go back to Moses. "The germs of ethical monotheism," as A. R. Gordon says, "are already found in the Yahweh religion as proclaimed by Moses, and handed down in its purity among the 'thousands in Israel that have not bowed the knee to Baal.' . . . There is no real breach between the prophets' exalted conceptions of God, and the earlier faith in Yahweh in the pious circles in the land. . . . The religion of Yahweh —by virtue of its ethical character—was instinct with the power of immortal life from the beginning. And this inherent quality is not to be explained from the events of history alone, nor yet from the external bond of the union that bound Israel with Yahweh, but from the essential character of Yahweh himself." [20]

In this connection two other errors may be noted into which Old Testament critics have fallen. In contending that the early religion of Israel was devoid of a higher ethical element they have often overlooked the fact that the literary remains from that early period are mere fragments, and that these fragments are of such a character that we would not naturally expect to find in them expressions of a higher ethical faith. The situation is similar to what would have been the case with regard to the eighth century B. C., if the prophetic sermons from that time had not come down to us. The historical narratives dealing with this period fail altogether to reveal to us

[19] Compare this statement by Wellhausen, *History of Israel,* p. 398: "After the spirit of the oldest men of God, Moses at the head of them, had been in a fashion laid to sleep in institutions, it sought and found in the prophets a new opening; the old fire burst out like a volcano through the strata which once, too, rose fluid from the deep, but now were fixed and dead."

[20] *The Early Traditions of Genesis,* pp. 118f.

the lofty faith attained by the prophets. And this may well be the case also with the narratives that have to do with the earlier periods of Israel's history. The date when an idea first appears in extant literature by no means fixes the date of its origin.

Again, critics have not taken adequate account of possible foreign and traditional elements in the religious beliefs of preexilic Israel. They have attempted to deduce these beliefs psychologically from the historical experiences of the nation. This method is no doubt in large measure justifiable. But over and above the beliefs that grow out of experience there is always in every nation a large body of beliefs that have been inherited from the past or borrowed from other peoples. Hence it is a mistake in method to attempt to deduce the entire teaching of the early prophets from the conditions of their own time, and to assume that their utterances must all have been logically consistent with each other. It is, for instance, claimed that the Messianic hope is inconsistent with the prophetic message of doom, and that the passages in the preexilic prophetic books that announce this hope must consequently be assigned to a later date. But it is quite possible, indeed probable, that the Messianic hope had been handed down from the past, and that the prophets simply adapted it to their own time without seeking to harmonize it with their message as a whole. In any case strict logical consistency is not to be expected of any man who lives in close touch with his age, and, least of all, of poets such as the prophets.

But apart from divergences of opinion due to such methodological errors as these there are still many points in which the data are too scanty and too uncertain to warrant a confident conclusion. Concerning many matters

in the history of Old Testament religion and literature we must remain in ignorance or content ourselves with mere conjecture. How uncertain the date of many individual passages is, is well illustrated by the widely different opinions of representative modern scholars. Kirkpatrick, for instance, assigns the second psalm to about B. C. 950; Briggs to B. C. 625; and Baethgen to the second century B. C. But in spite of such differences there is still a large body of facts on which critics are quite generally agreed, and these we now present in brief outline.

We begin with the preprophetic period, which extended from the time of Moses to that of Amos and covered about four hundred and fifty years (1200-750). Politically, this period was not a unit. It embraced the period of the Judges (1200-1030), that of the United Monarchy (1030-937), and a considerable part of that of the Divided Monarchy (937-750). But the political changes, represented by the establishment of the monarchy and its division, did not seriously affect the religious life and thought of the people. The establishment of the monarchy led to the removal of the neglected ark to Jerusalem and the building of the temple; and this, when worship was later centralized in Jerusalem, became an important factor in the religious life of the nation. But at first the temple was simply the royal sanctuary. This no doubt gave to it a certain preeminence, but worship elsewhere was not suppressed. And even its preeminence was not recognized in the larger northern kingdom after the division of the monarchy. There Bethel and Dan supplanted Jerusalem. The calf-worship set up in the northern sanctuaries by Jeroboam was severely condemned by later writers; and it did probably mark a decline from the purer

worship at the Jerusalem temple, at which no image seems to have been kept. But, in general, religious conditions in Judah did not differ essentially from those in Israel. Throughout the entire preprophetic period sacrifices were offered at many different sanctuaries, and much that was impure and heathenish came to be associated with them. When the Israelites settled in Canaan they adopted to a large extent the rites and customs of their new neighbors, and these acted in many cases as a corrupting influence in their life. As instances of this influence, or at least of a crude and undeveloped type of religious life, we may cite the widespread use of images as illustrated not only by the golden calves of Jeroboam, but by the ephod of Gideon,[21] the story of Micah,[22] and the teraphim in Saul's family;[23] we may also note the use of the lot in determining the divine will,[24] the superstitious sanctity attributed to the vow as evidenced in the cases of Jephthah[25] and Saul,[26] and the abhorrent rite of prostitution in connection with the public sanctuaries.[27]

But over against such facts as these is to be placed the prophetic movement which harked back to Moses and the marvelous deliverance from Egypt. This movement seems to have had in it at the outset more or less of the spirit of manticism and dervishlike ecstasy.[28] But on the whole it stood opposed to the corrupting influence of Canaanitic life and thought, and sought to promote the

[21] Judg. 8. 22-27.
[22] Judg. 17-18.
[23] 1 Sam. 19. 13ff.
[24] 1 Sam. 14. 18-20; 23. 2; 2 Sam. 2. 1.
[25] Judg. 11. 30ff.
[26] 1 Sam. 14. 24-46.
[27] Amos 2. 7; Hos. 4. 13f.
[28] 1 Sam. 10. 1-13; 19. 18-24.

purer faith of the fathers. The prophets seem to have been especially active in the eleventh century at the time of the Philistine peril, and again in the ninth century at the time of the Syrian menace. But they probably formed a continuous succession from the time of Moses down. They were deeply interested in the welfare of the nation, and did not hesitate to rebuke the rulers when occasion demanded. They regarded themselves as the direct mouthpiece of Yahweh, and as such were zealous advocates of his cause. They defended right and established custom as over against the lust and greed of kings, and when in the time of Ahab the sole authority of Yahweh was threatened by the introduction of the Tyrian Baal, they rose in rebellion against the reigning family and did not rest content until a new house had been set upon the throne. This was perhaps the greatest achievement of the preliterary prophets. The revolution of Jehu (B. C. 842), brought about by the work of Elijah and Elisha, outlawed the worship of other gods in Israel, and made Yahweh once for all supreme. This was no new doctrine. It had been plainly taught by Moses, but not apparently until the time of Elijah did its full practical significance come to be appreciated. In this connection it may be added that it is to be regarded as providential that Israel for three centuries after the settlement in Canaan was left unmolested by the great empires of the East and West. Had Israel in that early day been conquered by Egypt or Assyria, the free development of its religious life would have been impossible. Yahweh would have been subdued before his supremacy had been fully established. But when his name had once been set on high by the glorious reigns of David and Solomon, it was possible for the prophets to see in the disasters of the Syrian wars and in the threat-

ened subjection to Assyria an evidence not of his weakness but of his moral rectitude. The sufferings of these later days were a punishment for the people's sins.

The literature that has come down from the pre-prophetic period is not extensive. The Decalogue[29] in a briefer form may have been the work of Moses. The Code of the Covenant[30] and the so-called J Decalogue[31] are also early collections of laws. From the time of the Judges we have the Song of Deborah,[32] which is frequently spoken of as the earliest monument of Hebrew literature. The lament of David over Saul and Jonathan[33] is almost universally accepted as authentic, and the Blessing of Jacob[34] is also commonly assigned to the reign either of David or Solomon. The Oracles of Balaam,[35] too, may perhaps come from about the same time, though some scholars put them a century or two later. The Blessing of Moses[36] was probably written about B. C. 780. In addition to these poems there are a number of poetic fragments that are early, such as Exod. 15. 1b-3; Num. 10. 35f.; 21. 17f.; Josh. 10. 12b-13a; 2 Sam. 3. 33f.; 18. 33; 1 Kings 8. 12f. The Hero-Stories in the book of Judges were probably reduced to written form shortly after the division of the monarchy, and the Jerusalem stories of David[37] may have been still earlier. The latter document, as Kautzsch says, "is one of the most complete, truthful, and finished products of histor-

[29] Exod. 20. 1-17.
[30] Exod. 20. 22 to 23. 19.
[31] Exod. 34. 14-26.
[32] Judg. 5.
[33] 2 Sam. 1. 19-27.
[34] Gen. 49.
[35] Num. 23-24.
[36] Deut. 33.
[37] 2 Sam. 5-7; 9-20.

ical writing which have come down to us from the Hebrews, and, indeed, from the whole ancient world." [38] Many of the other narratives incorporated in Samuel and Kings are also early and reliable. The prophetic stories found in 1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 13 were probably written early in the eighth century. Of the J and E documents incorporated in the Pentateuch we have already spoken. They deal chiefly with the patriarchal and Mosaic periods and contain in that way not a little historical material, but their chief value lies in what they reveal concerning the beliefs of the Israelites in the ninth century when they were written.[39]

The prophetic period in Israel's religious history (750-450), like the preceding period, was lacking in political unity. Shortly after the time of Amos Samaria fell (721), and with it the larger part of the Davidic kingdom came to an end. Judah escaped a similar fate twenty years later by a marvelous deliverance from the hands of Sennacherib (701), and continued to exist as a state until the fall of Jerusalem in 586. After a period of about seventy years the temple was rebuilt (520-516), and the local community began to revive, largely as the result of the enthusiasm of the exiles who had returned. But conditions were far from encouraging. Poverty and oppression were the common lot, and doubt and despair often hung over the community. Such in brief were the outward fortunes of the Israelites during the prophetic

[38] *The Literature of the Old Testament.* p. 25.

[39] For a detailed study of the literature of the Old Testament in its chronological development see Kautzsch's *Literature of the Old Testament,* and especially Harlan Creelman's *Introduction to the Old Testament.* The latter is a book of exceptional value as a student's manual.

period. Calamity followed calamity, and hope time and again was disappointed. But Israel's religion, as some one has said, was like the pearl, which grows by the pain and the death of the oyster. The decline and fall of the state and the sufferings of the people only stimulated the prophets to new insight, leading them to enunciate those great spiritual truths that have become the permanent possession of mankind. It is literally true that the enduring elements in Old Testament religion were built upon the ruins of the state. If it had not been for the work of the prophets, it is virtually certain that Israel's religion would have perished with the fall of the nation. Old Testament religion is the only national religion that ever survived the nation's downfall. When other nations fell they threw their gods to the moles and the bats, thinking they had been overcome by superior deities. And this would have happened in Israel had it not been for the prophets, who during the period of the nation's decline elevated Yahweh to the throne of universal sovereignty, and declared that the destroyers of the nation were simply the instruments of his wrath. This is a most remarkable fact without parallel in the religious history of mankind. Had monotheism originated in Assyria or Egypt, it would not have been so strange, for these empires were virtually world-powers. But that it should have originated among a small people like the Hebrews, and have been first proclaimed among them at the very time that they were on the road to political ruin, is a fact so contrary to the normal operations of the human mind that we cannot but see in it a special manifestation of the presence of the Spirit of God. There is no better proof of the inspiration of the Old Testament than just this fact.

Aside from the teaching of the prophets, the outstand-

ing religious event in the prophetic period was the Deuteronomic reform. This was effected in B. C. 621. It was an attempt to make the Israelitic state conform with the demands of the prophets, so that it might escape the doom which had been pronounced upon it. But the reform was too external and superficial to accomplish its purpose. The centralization of worship, however, which it established proved a significant element in the subsequent life of the people. After the fall of Jerusalem a similar program was outlined for the restored community by Ezekiel (572), and this too had an important influence on the later development of the Jewish Church. But it was not until the next period that this influence came to full fruition.

With the advent of the literary prophets we are able for the first time to date somewhat precisely the monuments of Hebrew literature that have come down to us. The dates of the eighth-century prophets (Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah) can be determined with a fair degree of certainty. The same is also true of the group of prophets who appeared shortly before the fall of Jerusalem (Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Ezekiel). Isaiah 40-55 is to be placed at about B. C. 540, and the following chapters (56-66) within the next seventy or eighty years. Haggai and Zechariah give their own dates (520), and Malachi and Obadiah probably belong shortly before 450. Besides Deuteronomy and Ezekiel 40-48 we have another legal code in this period, the so-called Law of Holiness,[40] now incorporated in P. Its exact date is uncertain, but it should perhaps be placed after Ezekiel (560-550). J, E, and D were combined into a single work during the exile, and to about the same time is to be

[40] Lev. 17-26.

referred the Deuteronomistic redaction of Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Lamentations, in part at least, must have been written shortly after the fall of Jerusalem, and the Song of Moses (Deut. 32) should probably be assigned to about 560. The completed Psalter and the book of Proverbs belong to a later date, but many individual psalms and proverbs no doubt had their origin in this period. Indeed, some of them may be older still.

Concerning the external history of Israel during the legalistic or levitical period (450-150) we know comparatively little. The Jewish community restored after the exile was a church, not a state. Its interests were ecclesiastical, not political. Not until the very close of the period did it assume independent political action, and then simply in defense of its faith. What the post-exilic Jews aimed at was the establishment of a religious community so pure and holy that it would prove worthy of the glorious promises made to the nation by the prophets of old. It was this motive that lay back of the elaborate legal system that became the foundation of Judaism. A preliminary sketch of this system was made by Ezekiel (chapters 40-48). Later priests developed it, and finally under Ezra and Nehemiah (444) it was made the law of the restored community. This law tended to create a sharp line of distinction between the Jews and other peoples. The wall of Jerusalem rebuilt by Nehemiah was symbolic of the wall of separation that he and Ezra established between the Jewish and heathen worlds. Intermarriage with other peoples was forbidden, and certain peculiar rites and customs were insisted upon which gave to Judaism an exclusive and nationalistic character that seems out of harmony with the earlier prophetic teaching.

But this very exclusiveness served an important purpose. It enabled Judaism to maintain its integrity as over against Greek naturalism, which became dominant throughout southwestern Asia after the conquests of Alexander. Judaism is "the only example of an Oriental religion emancipating itself from the influence of Hellenism" (Schürer). And it became such, as Cornill says, only "because Ezra and Nehemiah had rendered it hard as steel and strong as iron. In this impenetrable armor it was insured against all attacks, and thus saved religion against Hellenism. And therefore it behooves us to bless the prickly rind, to which we owe it, that the noble core remained preserved." [41] Had it not been for the work of Ezra and Nehemiah, the successful revolt of the Maccabees would have been impossible, and Judaism would have been crushed by Antiochus Epiphanes.

But while legalism was the dominant characteristic of Old Testament religion after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the literature that has come down to us from this period makes it evident that there were also other significant forces at work among the people. The legalistic tendency was embodied in the Priests' Code, which seems to have been united with J, E, and D to form the Pentateuch about B. C. 444. In recent times, however, not a few scholars have put Ezra's expedition after that of Nehemiah, and in that case the completion of the Pentateuch should probably be assigned to about B. C. 398, the seventh year of the second Artaxerxes.[42] The tendency reflected in P appears also in the priestly histories, Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah, which originally formed one work, and in Esther. As distinct from, and at times opposed

[41] *The Prophets of Israel,* pp. 162f.

[42] Ezra 7. 7.

to, this tendency, we have the prophetic spirit, which manifested itself in three different ways. In such books as Ruth and Jonah it directly opposed the narrowness and exclusiveness of the legalistic program. In apocalyptic works, such as Joel, Isaiah 24-27, Zechariah 9-14 and Daniel, it kept alive the earlier prophetic hopes of the speedy coming of the kingdom of God. And in the Psalms it nurtured a deep spirit of personal piety such as we find in Jeremiah. Another significant tendency in post-exilic Judaism was that represented by the Wisdom Literature—Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes. Here the speculative and humanistic spirit in Israel manifests itself. Religion is a problem which each one feels called upon to settle for himself. This type of thought no doubt had its place to some extent in the earlier history of Israel, but the three Old Testament books in which it is embodied belong, at least in their completed form, to the legalistic period.

We thus have at the close of the Old Testament dispensation a complex religious life. There were diverse and even contradictory elements in it. But in the midst of all the diversity and all the contradictions there was a solid body of truth, the product of centuries of spiritual struggle, which was destined to form the basis of a universal faith.

For the convenience of the reader the following table giving the approximate dates of the more important documents in the Old Testament is appended:

1. The Preprophetic Period (B. C. 1200-750).
   Decalogue (Exod. 20. 1-17), 1200?
   Song of Deborah (Judg. 5), 1100.
   David's Elegy (2 Sam. 1. 19-27), 1015.

Blessing of Jacob (Gen. 49), 1000-950.
Oracles of Balaam (Num. 23-24), 1000-800.
Code of Covenant (Exod. 20. 22 to 23, 19), 1200-800.
The so-called J Decalogue (Exod. 34. 14-26), 1200-800.
Hero-Stories in Book of Judges, 900.
Early Saul and David Stories, 950-900.
J Document, 850.
E Document, 800.
Blessing of Moses (Deut. 33), 780.
Prophetic Stories in 1 Kings 17 to 2 Kings 13, 775.

2. The Prophetic Period (B. C. 750-450).
Amos, 750.
Hosea, 743-734.
Isaiah, 740-700.
Micah, 725-715.
J and E united, 650.
Zephaniah, 627.
Deuteronomy discovered, 621.
Habakkuk, 621-600.
Nahum, 607.
Jeremiah, 626-586.
Ezekiel, 592-570.
Code of Ezekiel, 572.
Code of Holiness, 560-550.
Lamentations, 580-550.
Song of Moses (Deut. 32), 560.
Union of J, E, and D, 550.
Deuteronomistic redaction of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, 550.
Isaiah 40-55, 540.
Isaiah 56-66, 536-460.
Haggai, 520.
Zechariah, (1-8), 520-518.
Malachi, 460.
Obadiah, 460.

3. The Legalistic Period. (B. C. 450-150).
P published and united with JED, 444 or 398.
Ruth, 440-430.
Memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, 432-398.
Joel, 400.
Job, 400-350.
Song of Solomon, 350-300.

Jonah, 300.
Proverbs, 300-250.
Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah, 300-250.
Isaiah 24-27, 250-200.
Zechariah 9-14, 250-200.
Ecclesiastes, 200.
Daniel, 164.
Esther, 160.
Psalms, 450-150.

II

GOD AND ANGELS

CHAPTER II

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD

Personality and moral quality, as Professor Hocking says, "may well be regarded as the most humanly valuable attributes of the divine nature." [1] Indeed, without them the conception of God would be of very slight value. The former gives to religion its distinctive character, and the latter imparts to it its rational worth. It is these two attributes that are most conspicuous in the Old Testament. We here deal with the first, the personality of God.

"Personality" is a term that has had various connotations. Frequently it has been thought to imply corporeality, or form or limitation of some kind. But no such implication necessarily attaches to the term. "The essential meaning of personality," as Professor Bowne says, "is selfhood, self-consciousness, self-control, and the power to know." [2] And in this sense the personality of God is the basal idea in religion. Without it there could be no religion in the proper sense of the term. "Religion," to quote Bowne again, "demands the mutual otherness of the finite and infinite, in order that the relation of love and obedience may obtain. Both love and religion seek for union, but it is not the union of absorption or fusion, but, rather, the union of mutual understanding and sympathy which would disappear if the otherness of

[1] *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, p. 207.
[2] *Personalism*, p. 266.

the persons were removed." [3] "No impersonal being," as Fairbairn puts it, "whether named fate or chance, necessity or existence, the soul or the whole, can be an object of worship, though it may be an object of thought. As a matter of historical fact, no religion has ever been a pantheism, nor has any pantheism ever constituted a religion. . . . The impersonal must be personalized before thought, which is a subjective activity, can pass into worship, which is a reciprocal action, or a process of converse and intercourse between living minds." [4]

The personality of God is therefore no peculiarity of Old Testament or biblical religion. It is a belief that belongs to all religions worthy of the name. It is, however, an idea that has been apprehended with different degrees of clearness by different peoples. Among the Semites in general the tendency was to think of God in more distinctly personal terms than was the case among other peoples, and this was especially true of the Hebrews. "In the Old Testament conception of God," says Schultz, "nothing stands out from the first so strongly and unmistakably as the personality of the God of Israel. There is nowhere even the faintest inclination to the thought of a God without consciousness or will." [5] One reason for this significant fact is to be found in the close relation that Yahweh sustained to history. Nature is impersonal, and the gods of nature partake to some degree of its impersonality. But Yahweh was primarily a God, not of nature, but of history. And history is personal. It is the scene of human action. Its forces are personal forces. A god consequently who manifests himself chiefly in the field of

[3] *Personalism*, p. 284.
[4] *Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 241.
[5] *Old Testament Theology*, vol. ii, p. 103.

history necessarily partakes of the personal character of history. And so it was with Yahweh. From the beginning of the nation's history he stood in the most intimate relation to the life of the people. He revealed himself in their fortunes and misfortunes, in their hopes and fears, in their longings and aspirations. *Their* personal life was as a result imparted to him, and he became as intensely personal as they. In this connection it may be added that this manifestation of God in history was, as Andrew Harper says, "the only possible form for a real revelation of God; and that the writers of the Old Testament in their circumstances and in their time felt and asserted this, is in itself so very great a merit that it is almost of itself sufficient to justify any claims they may make to special inspiration." [6]

Under the personality of God we might discuss the entire Old Testament doctrine of God. For personality is an inclusive category and might be regarded as embracing all the attributes that can properly be ascribed to the Deity. But some of these attributes, such as the divine unity, spirituality, power, holiness, righteousness, and love, are of such special importance that we deem it best to reserve a separate chapter for each. Here we shall discuss simply the general idea of personality and some of its essential implications.

The Old Testament does not raise the question of the divine existence or the question as to the possibility of knowing God. These are philosophical questions that did not exist for the ancient Hebrew mind. That God or gods existed was universally assumed. The fool might

[6] *The Book of Deuteronomy*, p. 52.

say in his heart that there was no God,[7] but in saying this he did not mean to deny the actual existence of God. What he meant was that he himself in his own life took no account of the divine existence; he lived as though there were no God; he was altogether heedless of the outcome of his evil ways.[8] In a word, his atheism was practical, not theoretical. And such an atheism is in the nature of the case immune to all argument except that of painful experience. Hence the Old Testament writers nowhere attempt to prove the divine existence. They refer now and then to the wonders of creation, the glory and beauty of nature, as evidence of the power and wisdom of God,[9] but they do this not to prove that there is a God but to make the already existent belief in him warmer and heartier, more vivid and vital. So far as the unbeliever was concerned, they contented themselves with proclaiming the retributive righteousness of God. All who forgot him and disobeyed his will would certainly perish.

In the same way the knowledge of God was assumed. Agnosticism in the modern sense of the term had no place in Hebrew thought. Religion by its very nature implies that God has revealed himself, and this conviction lay at the root of Israelitic life and belief. Now and then a voice might be heard like that of Agur, the son of Jakeh,[10] protesting against too confident a knowledge of God. And there were always those in Israel who were deeply conscious of the limitations of human thought when it came to the things of God.

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[7] Psa. 14. 1; 53. 1.
[8] Psa. 10. 4; Zeph. 1. 12.
[9] Isa. 40. 12, 26; Psa. 8. 1; 19. 1; 104. 5-11.
[10] Prov. 30. 1-4.

"Canst thou by searching find out God?
Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" [11]

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." [12] Even all the wonders of nature

"are but the outskirts of his ways:
And how small a whisper do we hear of him!
But the thunder of his power who can understand?" [13]

Limited, however, as God's revelation of himself was, it was valid so far as it went. He did not reveal his inmost nature to men. Even Moses was permitted to see only the back of God and not his face.[14] There was in Israel a general feeling that man could not see God and live.[15] Then, too, in antiquity what men were primarily interested in was not the nature of God, but his will and law.[16] If they knew the divine purpose and the divine requirements, they were content. And this, Israel was confident, had been revealed to them. Their possession of the Law was a source of national pride. "What great nation," they asked, "is there that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous?" [17]

As the existence and knowledge of God were assumed, so also was his personality. There was no pantheistic

[11] Job 11. 7.
[12] Isa. 55. 8-9.
[13] Job 26. 14.
[14] Exod. 33. 20-23, J.
[15] Judg. 13. 22; Isa. 6. 5.
[16] 2 Kings 17. 26.
[17] Deut. 4. 7-8.

philosophy against which the Old Testament writers were forced to contend. They all belonged to what Auguste Comte termed the theological stage of thought. Ultimate existence for them took on the personal form. Will was the first cause of all things. The idea of an impersonal law or power not ourselves that makes for righteousness, such as Matthew Arnold substituted for the God of the Old Testament, was wholly foreign to them.

The personality of God is implied or expressed in the Old Testament in a great variety of ways. But there are three particular forms of expressing it that call for special attention. The first is the personal name, "Jehovah" or "Yahweh." It is now well known that "Jehovah" is a hybrid word, made up of the consonants of "Yahweh" or "Jahveh" and the vowels of the Hebrew word for "Lord," *Adonay*, the first *a* in Adonay being in the original a half-vowel, which after *y* or *j*, according to a regular law of the language, became a very short *e*. This combination grew out of the superstitious reverence in which the name "Yahweh" came to be held by the later Jews and which led them to eschew its use altogether. A trace of this superstition appears as early as the book of Amos, where in a pestilence the people in their terror are represented as saying that they dare not make mention of the name of Yahweh.[18] Later in the Old Testament, as in the second book of the Psalter,[19] and in Ecclesiastes, there is observable a tendency to use instead of Yahweh the general name for God, "Elohim." This tendency to avoid the name "Yahweh" continued to become more and more pronounced until finally the name ceased to be used at all, and even its pronunciation was forgotten. So

[18] 6. 10.

[19] Psa. 42 to 72 or perhaps 42 to 89.

strong apparently was the feeling on this point in some quarters that in the Septuagint and some of the other versions the word "blaspheme" in Lev. 24. 11, 16 was rendered "name," so that the text was made to impose the death penalty upon those who merely *named* the divine name. Wherever the sacred Tetragram (YHWH) appeared in the biblical text, the Jews would read "Adonay," or in some cases "Elohim." And so when in the sixth or seventh century of our era vowel points were added to the text so as to fix the vocalization, the vowels of Adonay were attached to Yhwh or Jhvh to indicate that the name was to be read "Adonay." There was no thought whatsoever of pronouncing the name "Yehowah" or "Jehovah." This hybrid form did not arise until about the time of the Reformation.

Concerning the origin and derivation of the name "Yahweh" there is wide diversity of opinion. In two of the Pentateuchal documents, P and E, its introduction seems to be attributed to Moses. In Exod. 6. 2-3 (P) we read: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah I was not known to them." And in Exod. 3. 13-15 (E) we are told that when Moses was about to return from Horeb to Egypt he was uncertain by what name to designate the God who had sent him, and that it was then that the name "Yahweh" was revealed to him. Consistently with this view both documents, P and E, avoid the use of the name until after the account of its revelation to Moses. In J,[20] on the other hand, it is stated that way back in the time of the antediluvian patriarch Enosh men began to call upon the name of Yahweh. And J himself

[20] Gen. 4. 26.

uses the name from the very beginning of his narrative in the second chapter of Genesis. What the exact facts were, lying back of this diverse tradition, is not easy to determine. Some, such as A. B. Davidson,[21] seek to harmonize the different narratives by holding that while the name "Yahweh" was known to the Hebrews before the time of Moses it did not receive divine sanction till his day. Then for the first time it was "appropriated by God and authorized as part of his manifestation of himself." Others, such as Kautzsch,[22] take the view that Yahweh before the time of Moses was "the God of one or more tribes, or perhaps the God of one particular family," but not the God of all Israel. Still others—and this at present seems to be the favorite theory—hold that Yahweh was originally a Kenite or Midianite deity worshiped at Sinai-Horeb, and that he was made God of Israel by Moses. That the name "Yahweh" in any case antedated the time of Moses would seem clear. Indeed, some Assyriologists contend "that the Babylonians were accustomed to the use of the divine name 'Jau' or 'Jahveh' during the period from B. C. 2000 to B. C. 1400," and that traces of its use appear also elsewhere outside of and independent of Israel.[23] But however this may be, it is generally admitted that it was Moses who first gave special significance to the name. It was he who made the worship of Yahweh in Israel "the fundamental basis of the national existence and history," [24] "the conscious motive power of an organized national life." [25]

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[21] *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 68.
[22] *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. v, p. 627.
[23] Rogers, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 89-98.
[24] Wellhausen, *History of Israel*, p. 433.
[25] Schultz, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. i, p. 133.

What the name "Yahweh" originally meant is not known. A popular etymology is given in Exod. 3. 13-15 (E). The name is here connected with the verb "to be," and is interpreted as meaning either the *absolute* and *self-subsistent* Being or the *really existing* One as distinguished from other gods, or perhaps the *I-will-be-with thee* God, a God who is ever present with his people. The exact thought in the author's mind is not certain. But this etymology, while interesting and suggestive, was probably an after-thought. It does not give the actual derivation of the name. Many other derivations have consequently been suggested. But none of them have been able to command general assent; and the probability is that the original meaning of the name has been lost beyond recovery.

But the real significance of the name "Yahweh" does not lie in its meaning. It lies in the fact that it is a personal name. It distinguishes the God of Israel from all other deities. He is not one of a class but a distinct and separate Being. He has an individuality, a definite character of his own. The very fact that he bore a personal name emphasized this distinctness of his personality. And when finally the belief in the existence of other gods vanished the implications of the personal name were naturally carried over into the general conception of Deity. *God* became as personal as *Yahweh,* and the name "Yahweh" was used to express the special differentiating quality of the true God.[26] The richness of Hebrew monotheism was thus due in no small measure to the fact that it grew out of an earlier monolatry. The personality of Yahweh made more concrete and more real the personality of God.

[26] See Ezek. 25. 5, 7, 11, 17, etc.

Another way in which the personality of God comes to expression in the Old Testament is by the use of anthropomorphisms. There is a sense in which the mere ascription of personality to God might be called anthropomorphic. For we arrive at the idea of personality through our own experience. The only personality that we know anything directly about is human personality. To speak, then, of God as a Person is to think of him under the human form. But such an anthropomorphism is unavoidable if we are to retain a conception of God that is of any religious value.[27] Personality is the highest category of which we know anything. "Superpersonal existence" is a phrase without any concrete content, an unknown quantity that means no more to us than an algebraic *xyz*. If we are, therefore, to think of God, it must be either under the personal or some subpersonal form. There is no third alternative. But even though this be admitted, the idea still persists that personality involves limitation and so is inapplicable to the Infinite. Some other term must be found to express his nature. To speak of him as personal is anthropomorphic in the derogatory sense of the term. But this idea rests upon a false conception of the nature of personality. Human personality is limited, but personality as such involves no necessary limitation. It means simply self-knowledge and self-direction, and in this sense it is so far from being inconsistent with the nature of the Absolute that "we must really say that complete and perfect personality can be found only in the Infinite and Absolute Being, as only in him can we find that complete and perfect selfhood and self-expression which is necessary to the fullness of personality." [28]

[27] See F. L. Strickland's *Foundations of Christian Belief*, pp. 162ff.
[28] Bowne, *Personalism*, pp. 266f.

The conception of God as personal is, therefore, not anthropomorphic in the sense that it implies limitation of any kind.

But there are in the Old Testament a great many anthropomorphic expressions that do seem to imply a distinct limitation of the Divine Being. We may classify these anthropomorphisms as physical and psychological. On the one hand, God is spoken of as though he possessed a human form and was spatially limited. He walks in the garden in the cool of the day;[29] he comes down to see the building of the tower of Babel;[30] he visits Abraham apparently in human form.[31] He speaks to him and his human servants generally as one man to another. We read of his hand, mouth, eye, ear, arm. The organs and physical activities of men in general are attributed to him. And so also with the inner life of man. Not only does Yahweh have the essential attributes of personality, self-consciousness and self-direction, but the passions and changing purposes of men are ascribed to him. He becomes angry, takes vengeance on his enemies, laughs to scorn the pride of men, is jealous, hates as well as loves, and also repents.

This anthropomorphic method of speech runs throughout practically the whole of the Old Testament. A certain development in it is, however, observable. In the preprophetic period, represented by the J and E documents and the early narratives in the book of Judges, physical anthropomorphisms are more common than in later times, though even in the postexilic period they are not altogether avoided. They are found in P,[32] and as late as the second century B. C. God appears in a vision

[29] Gen. 3. 8, J.
[30] Gen. 11. 5, J.
[31] Gen. 18, J.
[32] Gen. 17. 1, 22; 35. 9, 13.

as an aged, white-haired man.[33] In the prophetic period physical anthropomorphisms give place largely to the psychological. These, however, abound. The prophets cling tenaciously to this style of speech. They ascribe to the Deity human passions and motives with the utmost freedom. And it is somewhat surprising, as A. B. Davidson observes, that Deutero-Isaiah, in spite of his very lofty and highly developed doctrine of God, is "more addicted to the use of anthropomorphisms than any other prophet." [34] In the postexilic period there is a tendency to moderate at least the use of anthropomorphisms. This is especially evident in the P document. We need only compare its account of creation[35] with that in J[36] to see that it represents a more transcendental conception of God—a conception that seeks to distinguish him from everything material and to free him from the limitations of human life and activity. This tendency became still more pronounced in postcanonical Judaism, but in the New Testament we have a return to the warmer anthropomorphic or anthropopathic speech of the prophets.

We need not here raise the question as to how far the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament were consciously metaphorical. To a very considerable extent they undoubtedly were such. The very variety of the forms under which the divine manifestations and activities are represented makes this evident. But at the same time it is equally clear that the current conceptions of the Deity were such that many things could then be said literally of him which to-day would have to be understood in a figur-

[33] Dan. 7. 9.
[34] *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 174.
[35] Gen. 1.
[36] Gen. 2-3.

ative or accommodated sense. What we are, however, here concerned about is not to determine the extent of the literal and the metaphorical in the Old Testament use of anthropomorphisms, but to point out the fact that the great purpose actually served by these anthropomorphisms is to emphasize the personality of God. He is a living, acting Being, a Being touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He does not stand apart from men but enters in the most intimate way into their experiences. He counsels them, commands them, blesses them, punishes them. In a word, he is the great outstanding fact of their lives. This truth it is that lies back of the biblical use of anthropomorphisms and is enforced by them. In no other way could the personality of God at that time have been adequately and effectively expressed. Concrete conceptions and concrete modes of speech, such as we find in the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament, were the only ones that could then be fully understood.

A third way in which the Old Testament brings out the idea of the personality of God is by its teaching concerning his free relation to nature and history. Freedom and self-direction is an essential constituent of personality. Wherever we have freedom and self-consciousness we have a personal being. It is here that the dividing line is drawn between personalism on the one hand and all impersonal systems of thought on the other. Necessity is the characteristic of the latter, and freedom with its implication of self-consciousness the characteristic of the former. In the Old Testament the ascription of freedom to the Deity was, of course, instinctive and immediate. He was looked upon as sustaining the same relation to the world as we do to the objects with which we deal. The

question as to when Yahweh came to be thought of as Creator of the world need not here be raised. It will be dealt with at some length in a later chapter. Here it need only be remarked that even if Yahweh during the earlier part of Israel's history was looked upon as an intra-mundane Being, he was nevertheless perfectly free in his relation to the world. He may not at that time have been thought of as holding all the forces of nature in the hollow of his hand, but so far as his power extended it was regarded as exercised with perfect freedom. And this was, if anything, still more the case when he came to be thought of as creator of all the world. The heavens and the earth were no necessary emanations from his being. They were his free acts, the work of his fingers. He spake, and the ordered universe began to be. Both animate and inanimate beings were the product of his word. And if so, it was self-evident to the Old Testament writers that he must be not only as free, but also as truly conscious as the beings he has made.

> "He that planteth the ear, shall he not hear?
> He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" [37]

This free intelligence of the Deity manifest in the work of creation was, if anything, still more manifest in his relation to history. For in history purpose reveals itself more readily than in nature. No doubt there was a purpose in creation. God formed the earth, we read, "to be inhabited." [38] But it is in history that we are able to trace most easily a divine plan. And so it was here that the free guiding hand of Yahweh manifested itself most distinctly.

[37] Psa. 94. 9.
[38] Isa. 45. 18.

We need not at this point raise the question as to when the idea of a world purpose was first ascribed to Yahweh. This topic will engage our attention in a subsequent chapter. Here it suffices to point out that no matter how limited Yahweh's outlook at the first may have been, he was never lacking in a purpose or plan. From the very beginning he was thought of as having purposed good concerning Israel. This purpose no doubt in the course of the centuries came to be thought of in broader, clearer, and more spiritual terms, but as a purpose it was distinct from the outset, and as such implied the free relation of Yahweh to human history. In this connection it may be pointed out that the idea of a series of world-cycles, so persistent in all Eastern thought, failed to gain lodgment in Israel. The author of Ecclesiastes apparently accepted it, and his pessimism was to some extent the outcome of it. "That which hath been," he says, "is that which shall be; and that which hath been done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." [39] But in the teaching of the prophets and in Hebrew thought in general the idea found no place. And the reason was the strong sense of the divine will and personality that prevailed in ancient Israel. No supreme *Person* could tolerate the thought of an unending series of recurrent cycles. Personality must have an ultimate goal, an end to be attained. And so Hebrew thought introduced into the ancient scheme of world-cycles the idea of development. The present order would come to an end, but it would be succeeded by another of a higher character. There would be no mere return of the present cycle, but a step forward, progress. This great thought we owe to the Hebrews, and owe it especially to "the

[39] I. 9.

strong sense of personality, human and divine, which characterized all the faith of the prophets." [40]

The freedom of God in his relation to nature and history is implied practically everywhere throughout the Old Testament, but it is particularly clear in connection with the idea of miracle. There are two periods in Israel's history during which miracles are represented as especially common. The first was in the time of Moses when the nation was created and established upon a religious foundation, the other was during the great revival connected with the names of Elijah and Elisha. But miracles were by no means confined to these two periods. They belonged to Old Testament history as a whole. The canonical prophets say very little concerning them, but it is evident that they believed firmly in their possibility. When Ahaz was apparently hesitating, uncertain whether to accept Isaiah's assurance of the divine help, the prophet turned to him and said, "Ask thee a sign of Jehovah thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above." [41] "Tremendous words," says Cornill, "a belief in God of such intensity as to appear to us men of modern times fanatical." [42] It has even been suggested that it was fortunate for the prophet that the king did not take him at his word. Had he done so, the promised sign might not have been forthcoming. But whatever may be our opinion on that point, there was no doubt in the prophet's mind, nor apparently in that of the king. Both believed that God stood ready to perform a miracle at any time if the occasion should demand it. And this was the common belief of the day.

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[40] A. C. Welch, *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom*, p. 260.
[41] Isa. 7. 11.
[42] *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 62.

Miracle, it is true, did not have the same significance for the ancient mind that it has for us. Nature was not then thought of as a fixed and inflexible order as it is to-day. A certain uniformity in its processes was, of course, observed, and this was recognized as an established fact: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." [43] But along with this established order large room was left for the extraordinary and miraculous, and the established order itself was not thought of as offering any resistance to the divine will. There was consequently no inherent difficulty in the idea of miracle. Indeed, miracles need not necessarily point to Yahweh as their source. A false prophet might perform them, and in that case the people are warned not to be led astray. They are told, by implication at least, that the self-attesting power of truth is more important than any outward sign.[44] But while miracle did not have the same significance for the ancient mind that it has for us, the belief in its possibility served essentially the same purpose as it does to-day. It made vivid and concrete the thought of God's free relation to the world, and so gave definiteness and distinctness to the conception of his personality. He is no blind force of nature, no vague spiritual presence, no abstract principle, but a living personal Being, who distinguishes himself from the world which he has made, freely communicates himself to his children, and by his sovereign will guides the course of nature and history.

Schultz, writing thirty years or so ago, says that "the

[43] Gen. 8. 22, J.
[44] Deut. 13. 1-3.

tendency in the newer theology, which inclines to a less definitely personal conception of God feels clearly enough its antagonism to the Mosaic idea of God, and lets this be seen in its depreciation of the Old Testament.[45] But since that time there has been a marked drift of thought in the opposite direction. "One of the encouraging signs of present-day religious thinking," as F. J. McConnell says, "is the movement away from the God of the abstract to the God of the concrete, in spite of the fact that connection with the concrete means limitation."[46] And with this tendency there has gone a renewed appreciation of the Old Testament. It is coming to be felt that "the tendencies of modern philosophy support the religious ideas of the Old Testament."[47] Auguste Comte distinguished three stages in the history of human thought: the theological, "when all phenomena are referred to wills, either in things or beyond them"; the metaphysical, when phenomena are explained "by abstract conceptions of being, substance, cause, and the like"; and the positive, when "men give up all inquiry into metaphysics as bootless, and content themselves with discovering and registering the uniformities of coexistence and sequence among phenomena." According to this scheme, God is first conceived of as personal, is then reduced to some impersonal principle or abstraction, and finally is given up altogether as an object of inquiry. But the last two stages have proven unsatisfactory, and so we are witnessing a return to the first, the stage to which the Old Testament belongs. Personality is again being restored to its central place in

[45] *Old Testament Theology,* vol. ii, pp. 103f.

[46] *The Increase of Faith,* p. 78.

[47] W. H. Robinson, *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament,* p. 226.

human thought, but with a difference. The ancients were inclined to look upon caprice and arbitrariness as necessary factors in personality or will. And so God was thought of as more or less arbitrary and capricious in his relation to the world. Even the Old Testament does not altogether succeed in rising above this tendency. We see it in the unreasonable exclusiveness and undue hankering after the miraculous, characteristic of the postexilic period. But since that time "we have," as Bowne says, "learned the lesson of law, and we now see that law and will must be united in our thought of the world. Thus man's earliest metaphysics reemerges in his latest; but enlarged, enriched, and purified by the ages of thought and experience." [48]

[48] *Personalism,* Preface, pp. v-vii.

CHAPTER III

THE UNITY OF GOD

Unity as applied to the Deity has a double signification. It means that he is one, that he does not differentiate himself into a number of local and independent manifestations; and it means also that he is only, that there is no other god. In the former sense the unity of God is an implication of his personality, and stands opposed to pantheism; in the latter sense it denies polytheism, and asserts the rule of one supreme will and intelligence in the world. In both senses the unity of God is taught in the Old Testament. The famous saying in Deut. 6. 4, "Jehovah our God is one Jehovah," embodies both ideas. It asserts both the oneness and the uniqueness of Yahweh. He is one, a unitary Being, by way of contrast with the multiplicity of Baals, and he is unique, the only true God, by way of contrast with the current belief in many gods. Both monotheism and monoyahwism constitute thus the doctrine of the *Shema,*[1] the saying that became the watchword of Judaism.

Yahweh as a Unitary Personality

The conception of Yahweh as a distinct and indivisible personality dates from the beginning of Israel's history. From the time of Moses on Yahweh was thought of as a single and unitary Being. But at the outset this was spon-

[1] *Shema* is the Hebrew word for "hear," with which Deut. 6. 4 begins.

taneous, intuitive. No stress was laid on the fact of his unity. The fact was simply taken for granted, assumed as a constituent element in his personality. As we are conscious of our own unity and identity, so it naturally was with him. Later, however, as we see from Deut. 6. 4, this instinctive belief took on a more positive character. It came to be looked upon as a point of special religious significance, and was made a distinctive element in the true Israelite's creed.

The reason for this emphasis on the unity of Yahweh is to be found in the religious conditions that arose among the Hebrews after their settlement in Canaan. They were there confronted with a widespread worship of Baal, or, rather, Baals; for "Baal" was not a proper name. It did not designate the supreme deity of the Canaanites. Nor is it probable that there was originally one god by the name of Baal, a sun-god, who was later differentiated into a number of local Baals.[2] "Baal" was a common Semitic title applied to the deity. It meant owner or lord, and designated any particular numen, or deity, as inhabitant or owner of a place. In this sense it was in common use among the Canaanites and was applied by them to the local numina whom they worshiped. These numina were originally distinct from each other. But the fact that the same title was applied to them all, and the further fact that they were apparently thought of as quite similar in character, tended naturally to a blurring of their individuality. They came to be thought of as a group or class rather than as distinct individuals, and at times they seem to have been merged into a single divinity. We read, for instance, in the Old Testament not infrequently of "the

[2] For a recent defense of this view, see Eduard König, *Geschichte der alttestamentlichen Religion*, p. 255.

Baalim" and at other times of "Baal," not the Baal of any particular place, but Baal in general. Evidently, there was no little confusion of thought on the subject in the popular mind. The local Baals had to a considerable extent lost their unity and individuality. At the same time their persistence in the popular thought made it impossible to hold to the strict unity and individuality of a supreme Baal. The result was a pantheistically inclined nature-worship.

Such was the state of thought into which Israel was introduced in Canaan, and it was against it as a background that the unity of Yahweh came finally to be emphasized. At first the Israelites after gaining possession of the land substituted Yahweh for the local Baals and spoke of him as the Baal of the land. We have, for instance, such a name as Bealiah,[3] which means "Yahweh is Baal"; and according to Hosea[4] the people regularly addressed Yahweh as Baali, "My Baal." There are also a number of names of early Israelites from distinguished families, which are compounded with Baal, such as Jerubbaal (Gideon), Ishbaal (son of Saul), Meribbaal (son of Jonathan), Beeliada (son of David). Later Baal came to be regarded as a heathenish name, and hence was frequently changed by copyists to *Bosheth* ("shame"), so that we read Jerubbesheth, Ishbosheth, and Mephibosheth. Beeliada was apparently changed to Eliada, *El* ("god") taking the place of "Baal."[5] But originally there was manifestly no such aversion to the use of the name "Baal." In the time of Saul and David it was customary in the best circles to speak of Yahweh as Baal.

[3] 1 Chron. 12. 5.
[4] 2. 16.
[5] 1 Chron. 14. 7; 2 Sam. 5. 16.

This, however was a dangerous practice. It tended to obliterate the distinction between Yahweh-worship and Baal-worship, and tended also to confuse Yahweh with the local Baals.

Exactly what form this confusion took is a matter of difference of opinion. Some[6] hold that the syncretism never became so complete that the original distinction between Yahwism and Baalism was forgotten. The local Baals, although absorbed to a certain extent in Yahweh, never ceased to be distinguished from him. There was in the popular thought no conscious antithesis between the two, between the worship of Yahweh and that of the Baals, but they were never so completely identified that the Baals were regarded as having gone out of existence. Others,[7] however, take the view that the local Baals were at an early date completely supplanted by Yahweh. The rites and conceptions associated with them passed over into the worship of Yahweh, and they themselves ceased to exist. They were completely absorbed in Yahweh. This absorption, however, did not take place without its having a marked effect on the popular conception of Yahweh. He had taken the place of the local Baals, but in so doing had lost his own unity. Just as the absorption of ancient local divinities in Italy by the Virgin Mary led to the belief that there were different Madonnas, so it came to be believed in Israel that there were a number of Yahwehs. The Baalim, to which Hosea refers, were really in the popular thought local Yahwehs. And when we read of certain altars that were given the names Yahweh-yireh,[8]

[6] See König, *Geschichte der alttestamentlichen Religion,* p. 363.

[7] See Badé, *The Old Testament in the Light of To-day,* pp. 201-209; Peters, *The Religion of the Hebrews,* pp. 159f., 218; H. P. Smith, *The Religion of Israel,* pp. 183f.

[8] Gen. 22. 14.

Yahweh-nissi[9] and Yahweh-shalom,[10] we are not to suppose that these names were simply felicitous designations of different sanctuaries. They point to local differentiations of Yahweh. Likewise Absalom's request that he be permitted to pay his vow to Yahweh in Hebron[11] implies that the Yahweh of Hebron was looked upon as a different being from the Yahweh of Jerusalem. And so also there was a distinct Yahweh in Shiloh.[12]

That such a differentiation of Yahweh into a number of local and independent Yahwehs may have taken place, especially among the ignorant, is not improbable. But to say that the people in the seventh century B. C. were "given over to polyyahwism"[13] is to go far beyond what the evidence warrants. The fact is that the eighth-century prophets did not distinguish clearly between a heathenish worship of Yahweh and the worship of heathen gods. One in their sight was as reprehensible as the other. And it cannot in every instance be determined with certainty which evil they were condemning. The popular religion was probably a mixture of both. In any case there was current among the people a species of polytheism, whether polybaalism or polyyahwism does not matter much. Either would have furnished an adequate occasion for the assertion of the unity of Yahweh. He was one as over against the multiplicity of Baals, and he was also one as over against the belief that there was a plurality of Yahwehs.

This unity of Yahweh was grounded deep in the past

[9] Exod. 17. 15, E.
[10] Judg. 6. 24.
[11] 2 Sam. 15. 7.
[12] 1 Sam. 1. 3.
[13] Badé, *The Old Testament in the Light of To-day*, p. 208.

history of the people. It was one Yahweh that had delivered the Israelites from Egypt, and it was one Yahweh that had been their God throughout their entire national history. The very unity of the nation carried with it the unity of Yahweh. Indeed, the division of the monarchy in no way interfered with it. There is no suggestion anywhere that the Yahweh of the northern kingdom was a different being from the Yahweh of Judah. And in view of this fact there certainly was no reason why the existence of different sanctuaries should necessarily be construed as inconsistent with Yahweh's unity. In Israel's oldest collection of laws we are told that in every place where Yahweh causes his name to be remembered, that is, manifests himself, there he will come to his people and bless them.[14] And this must have been the general belief among the Israelites. The pronounced nationalism of their religion made it impossible that there should at any time have been any serious peril from polyyahwism. The prophets nowhere betray any fear of it. What they saw in the corrupt worship of their time was not so much a compromise of the unity of Yahweh's *being* as a compromise of the unity of his *character*. The current worship, though probably carried on for the most part in the name of Yahweh,[15] was so unworthy of his ethical and spiritual nature that it was indistinguishable from the worship of the conquered Baals. To have tolerated such a worship would have been to destroy the spiritual unity of Yahweh. And so the prophets denounced it as a worship of other gods.

It is from this point of view also that the Deuteronomic centralization of worship in Jerusalem is to be

[14] Exod. 20. 24.

[15] See Hos. 9. 3-5.

understood. What was feared from the numerous sanctuaries throughout the land was not so much the differentiation of Yahweh into a number of local Yahwehs as the growing corruption of his worship. The existence of but one sanctuary might perhaps have helped the popular imagination to grasp the idea of the unity of Yahweh's being. But the real motive lying back of the centralization of worship was not the desire to establish the abstract doctrine of the divine unity, but the desire to purify the public worship, which had been seriously corrupted, especially at the unregulated local sanctuaries. In this work of purification the recognition of the unity of the Divine Being would no doubt have its value. It would put an end to whatever tendencies there may have been to polybaalism or polyyahwism, and so would improve religious conditions in general, for these tendencies were closely bound up with the corrupt worship at the high places. But, like the prophets, what the Deuteronomists were primarily interested in was not the unity of the divine *being* but the unity of the divine *character*. The latter no doubt implied the former. But we understand the true significance of the Deuteronomic declaration that Yahweh is one, only when we make the practical motive lying back of it primary, only when we see that the real evils that prompted it were ethical. It was not the worship of local divinities in the name of Yahweh or along with Yahweh that constituted the great evil of the day, but the fact that this worship was unspiritual and immoral, and so contradicted the true ethical unity of Israel's God.

In this connection it may be noted that there were no sexual distinctions in the Hebrew idea of God. Yahweh had no feminine counterpart such as Baal had in

Astarte or Ishtar. This is a very significant fact. "Israel," says Cornill, "is the only nation we know of that never had a mythology, the only people who never differentiated the Deity sexually. So deep does this trait extend that the Hebrew language is not even competent to form the word 'goddess.' Where the book of Kings tells us of the supposed worship of idols by Solomon, we find written: 'Astarte, the *god* of the Phœnicians.' Not even the word 'goddess' is conceivable to the Israelites, much less the thing itself." [16] This statement may be somewhat extreme. It is doubtful if the difference between Israel and other peoples on this point was so absolute as Cornill makes out. The Hebrew word for "God" while masculine in form need not have excluded the feminine idea, and the contact of the Hebrews with the Canaanites and other Semitic peoples must, it would seem, have accustomed them to the idea that there were goddesses as well as gods. The frequent references in the Old Testament to the Ashtaroth would seem to make this clear. Indeed, it is not impossible that the Israelites themselves had originally, like the Arabs, female deities of their own. But however this may be, it can hardly be questioned that from the time of Moses on the unity of Yahweh was conceived so clearly and held so firmly that it permanently excluded the idea of a feminine counterpart. Female deities were no doubt worshiped here and there in Israel, and the immoral rites associated with them were, we know, introduced into Israel and became a serious evil. But Yahweh resisted all tendencies to amalgamation with any of them. He remained lone and solitary. And this fact gave to Israelitic religion a moral purity that would otherwise have been impossible. It did not save the pop-

[16] *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 23.

ular religion from the contaminating influences of the neighboring nature-faiths, and did not exclude altogether the grossly sensual practices that grew up among the Canaanites, Phœnicians, Aramæans, and Babylonians as a result of the sexual differentiation of the deity; but it did give to the Israelites an inner power of resistance to these evils which enabled them eventually to cast them out as heathenish and unclean. The unity of Yahweh was, therefore, a conception of no little moral and spiritual significance in the religious history of Israel.

But valuable as the idea of the strict unity of the Divine Personality was as over against the current pantheistic and polytheistic nature-worship, it still had its own limitations. It failed permanently to provide for that complexity and richness of the divine nature which seems necessary to satisfy the deepest needs of the human heart. And so in the course of time there grew up the Christian doctrine of the Trinity or Tri-unity. In view of the importance of this doctrine, the question naturally arises as to whether there were any anticipations of it in the Old Testament. It was once customary to find an allusion to it in the plural form of the pronoun which the Deity in several instances uses in referring to himself. "Let us," he says, "make man in our image;" [17] "Let us go down, and there confound their language";[18] "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" [19] But the plural in these instances, it is now commonly held, is either a plural of majesty, or, what is more probable, a reference to the court of heaven by which Yahweh was regarded as

[17] Gen. 1. 26, P.
[18] Gen. 11. 7, J.
[19] Isa. 6. 8.

surrounded. Other supposed indications of distinctions within the Godhead are found in such conceptions as the "Angel of Yahweh," [20] the "Face" or "Presence of Yahweh," [21] the "Name of Yahweh," [22] and the "Glory of Yahweh." [23] How far we have in these conceptions a true hypostatizing tendency and how far a mere personification of certain aspects or manifestations of the Divine Being is difficult to determine. At times the Angel of Yahweh seems clearly distinguished from Yahweh himself, and so also, though less clearly, his Face and Name and Glory. But these conceptions, whatever hypostatic distinctions may have been implied in them, developed as a matter of fact into nothing definite. They may be regarded as cases of arrested growth.

There are in the Old Testament three other conceptions that made a much deeper impression on Jewish and Christian thought. These are "the Spirit of God," "the Word of God," and "the Wisdom of God." The Spirit of God is not represented as a distinct personality in the Old Testament, but the beginnings of the idea are there.[24] The Word of God is in a number of instances[25] personified, and in so far the way was prepared for the later doctrine of the Logos. Still more emphatically is this true of the Wisdom of God. Here we have a conception that reaches the very verge of a true hypostasis.[26] In any case it is the most striking and distinct of the Old

[20] Gen. 16. 11, J; 21. 17, E; Judg. 6. 12; Gen. 24. 7, 40, J; Exod. 23. 20, E; 33. 2.

[21] Exod. 33. 14, J; Isa. 63. 9.

[22] Psa. 20. 1; 44. 5; 54. 1; 48. 10.

[23] Ezek. 1. 27f.; 3. 12; 9. 3; 10. 4; Isa. 40. 5; 60. 1f.

[24] Hag. 2. 5; Zech. 4. 6; Isa. 63. 10f.; 48. 16.

[25] Isa. 55. 11; Psa. 33. 6; 107. 20; 147. 15; Deut. 8. 3.

[26] Job 28. 23ff.; Prov. 8. 22ff.

Testament personifications. We have, then, in the Old Testament a number of tendencies toward the establishment of hypostatic distinctions in the divine nature; but these tendencies were all left in an undeveloped state, and led to no direct enrichment of the idea of God.

Yahweh as Sole Deity

We now come to the second sense in which the divine unity is affirmed, the sense, namely, that there is but one God. Here the Old Testament made one of its greatest contributions to the world's thought and faith. The monotheism of Christianity and Mohammedanism, as well as modern Judaism, is a direct inheritance from the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. It is, therefore, a matter of special interest to trace the development of Old Testament teaching on this point.

The unity of the Divine Personality was, as we have seen, apprehended more or less clearly from the outset, but the sole godhead of Yahweh was a truth that was only gradually attained. The different steps in this development may be distinguished with a fair degree of clearness. We begin with the Mosaic age. It was to Moses, as we have seen, that the establishment of Yahweh-worship was due. Previous to his time the Israelites seem to have been polytheists. On one of the cuneiform tablets discovered by Winckler at Boghazköj and belonging to the pre-Mosaic age we read of "the gods" of the Habiri or Hebrews,[27] and in Josh. 24. 2, 14f. and Ezek 20. 7f., 24 we are told that both in Mesopotamia and Egypt the Israelites worshiped other gods. The very name "Yahweh" also points in the same direction.

[27] Hugo Gressmann, *Mose und seine Zeit*, p. 425.

The manifest purpose of such a name was to distinguish the god of Israel from other gods. If the Hebrews had not believed in the existence of other deities, there would have been no need of giving a personal name to the Divine Being through whom they were delivered from Egypt. He would have been to them simply God. Then, too, it is a significant fact that the common Hebrew word for "God," *Elohim,* is plural in form. This plural, it is often said, was not numerical, but simply enhancive of the idea of might, a plural of majesty. And this was no doubt to a large extent true of later usage. But originally the plural form must have had a polytheistic background. People could have begun to use the plural "gods" to express the idea of divinity only at a time when they believed in the existence of a plurality of divine beings. This is illustrated by the Greek use of *theoi* and the Latin use of *dei.* The plural, *Elohim,* points, then, back to an earlier polytheistic stage of belief. And this stage we naturally locate in the pre-Mosaic period.

What Moses did was to put monolatry in place of the earlier polytheism. He did not deny the existence of other gods, but proclaimed Yahweh as the sole god of Israel. He did not say that there was but one God, but insisted that it was Israel's duty to have but one God.[28] But while he thus did not teach monotheism, the monolatry he established was an important step in that direction. And what made it such was the intensity of devotion that the worship of Yahweh called forth. Wellhausen has asked why, for instance, Chemosh of Moab did not become the God of righteousness and creator of the world instead of Yahweh, and has replied that a satis-

[28] Exod. 20. 3.

factory answer cannot be given.[29] What he would regard as a satisfactory answer we do not know, but one answer at least to his question may be found in the more passionate devotion that must have characterized the Israelitic worship of Yahweh. Chemosh may have been the god of Moab in very much the same sense as Yahweh was of Israel, and yet the different outcome in the two instances makes it evident that there must have been some difference between them. And the difference that most naturally suggests itself to our minds is a difference in the degree of loyalty that the two deities evoked. There must have been more of passion, more of intensity, in the worship of Yahweh than in that of Chemosh. For passion is, after all, the mainspring of religious development. It is not so much new ideas that give rise to passion, as it is passion that gives rise to new ideas. Yahweh in a marvelous way had delivered the Israelites from their oppressors in Egypt. At the very time when they seemed doomed to destruction he had rescued them. So great was this deliverance that only one response on the part of the people seemed adequate, and that was complete devotion to Yahweh and unlimited confidence in him. One who had wrought so remarkable a deliverance in the past could surely be trusted to meet every need of the people in the future, and was, therefore, deserving of their unquestioning obedience.

Such was the attitude of mind inculcated by Moses, and in it we have the germ of the whole subsequent religious development in Israel. If Yahweh was really believed to be equal to every emergency, it followed necessarily that the conception of his being would expand with the expanding needs of the people, until finally they

[29] *Kultur der Gegenwart,* Th. i, Abtlg. iv, p. 15.

would come to see that his rule was not only not limited to Israel nor to the nations of the then known world, nor even to this terrestrial life, but that it embraced the entire universe, so that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature was beyond the reach of his power and control. This entire development of the idea of God grew naturally and logically out of the monolatrous worship established by Moses. In this worship there may have been very little that was new so far as religious conceptions are concerned. That Yahweh, and he alone, was God of Israel had its parallel in other nations. And it is even a question how far, if at all, there was any differentiating quality in the Mosaic conception of his character. But that he evoked a new and sustained enthusiasm, that he called forth a depth and intensity of loyalty heretofore unknown, would seem clear from the subsequent history of Israel. And here it is that the most significant feature of Moses' work is to be found. What he contributed to the religious development of mankind was not so much new ideas as a new passion.

How far this new loyalty to Yahweh was from the outset exclusive and implied the rejection of all other deities is a question on which scholars are divided. Some, such as H. P. Smith,[30] hold that Moses permitted the hereditary clan and family gods to be worshiped along with Yahweh, and that the Israelites after their settlement in Canaan did nothing inconsistent with his teaching when they combined the worship of Yahweh with that of the local Baals and Ashtaroth. For centuries after the time of Moses there was, we are told, no feeling that Yahweh was an intolerant Deity. It was the religious

[30] *The Religion of Israel,* pp. 66-75, 82-86.

passion of Elijah that first gave rise to this idea. "We may," says H. P. Smith, "attribute to him the first formulation of the statement, so frequent in later times, that Yahweh is a jealous God."

But this view fails to do justice to the work of Moses. It fails to take account of the strength and depth of enthusiasm created by that initial act of divine grace which laid the foundations of Israelitic nationality. So intense was the loyalty to Yahweh then generated that it would seem clear that there must have been more or less of exclusiveness associated with it from the beginning.[31] If there was not, it is difficult to see how Elijah could have found any point of attachment for his message. When he summoned the people of his day to choose between Yahweh and Baal, he was making no new and unheard of demand upon them. They were well aware that the syncretistic movement then going on was not consonant with the character of Yahweh. And it was just that fact that gave power and leverage to the prophet's message. He was no innovator, but a reformer. He looked upon himself as simply reviving and carrying on the work of Moses. The God whom he proclaimed was in his every attribute the ancient God of Horeb. The idea of the intolerance of Yahweh did not then originate with him. That idea goes back to the very beginning. It was, to be sure, in subsequent times often overlooked by the people, often disregarded by them in practice, but it still remained as a real factor in the national consciousness. Indeed, it was just this factor that constituted the uniqueness of Israel's religion during the preprophetic period. "The

[31] See Küchler, *Der Gedanke des Eifers Jahwes im Alten Testament,* in *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft,* 1908, pp. 42-52.

peculiar thing," as Davidson says, "about Israel is not that it had one God, but that it had an evil conscience when it worshiped other gods." [32] And this evil conscience was a corollary of that passionate devotion to Yahweh which originated with Moses.

The Mosaic monolatry, we consequently hold, included the thought of the divine jealousy. The latter idea did not originate with Elijah, but it was nevertheless he who made the first distinct advance beyond the Mosaic monolatry. Moses had insisted that Yahweh, and he alone, was to be worshiped in Israel, but he had said nothing about the existence of other gods. He apparently assumed that the gods of the neighboring nations had a real existence similar to that of Yahweh. And this continued to be the popular belief in Israel down to the time of Elijah. In his day there arose for the first time a conflict between Yahweh and a neighboring deity. Previously the local Baals and various household gods had been worshiped in Israel, but they had been so completely subordinated to Yahweh that proper divinity could hardly be attributed to them. The people seem scarcely to have been aware that in worshiping them they were not worshiping the national deity. But when Jezebel introduced into Israel the worship of the Tyrian Baal a quite different situation was created. Here was a god of a neighboring and powerful people. There could be no question about his independence of Yahweh, or his claims to true divinity. What attitude, then, was to be taken toward him? Was his worship to be tolerated in Israel? If so, it would mean the end of that supreme and undivided allegiance which Yahweh had demanded from the outset. It would

[32] *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 91.

mean the recognition of two independent spiritual forces in Israel, and this in turn would mean the disruption of the national unity. Such a peril could not but cause the gravest concern. It brought the question of Yahweh's relation to foreign deities to a head. An immediate and definitive settlement of the problem seemed necessary. Compromise between Yahweh and Baal was not to be thought of; it was repugnant to all the best traditions of the nation. So Elijah demanded that the people make a final and unequivocal choice between the two. "If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." [33]

The question thus raised was settled, as was inevitable, in favor of Yahweh. But what did this decision imply with reference to Baal? What was Elijah's conception of him? To this question there are three different answers. Some contend that Elijah had no intention of denying the existence of Baal or his proper divinity in his own sphere. All that the prophet objected to was his encroachment upon territory that belonged to Yahweh. "It is evident," says H. P. Smith,[34] "that Elijah had no prejudice against other gods on their own territory. He went to Sidon, where the very Baal whom he opposed in Israel had his home, and remained quiet under his protection. His theory was evidently that each nation had its own god and that for Israel this God is Yahweh." Others see in Elijah's attitude to Baal a complete rejection of his existence. "The ridicule," says Kautzsch, "which he pours[35] upon the vain efforts of the prophets of Baal goes essentially beyond the sphere of henotheism,

[33] 1 Kings 18. 21.
[34] *The Religion of Israel*, p. 86.
[35] 1 Kings 18. 27.

and is equivalent to a complete denial, not only of the power but of the very existence of Baal." [36] Still others hold—and probably correctly—that Elijah did not go so far as to deny altogether the existence of Baal. The very fact that he was worshiped by a neighboring people would, according to contemporary modes of thought, imply that he was not a mere product of the imagination. Some sort of existence was probably allowed him. But whatever this was, it did not in Elijah's view constitute him in the true sense of the word a deity. He was not god in the same sense as Yahweh. The two did not belong to the same class. Yahweh alone was God. This truth was not applied by Elijah to heathen deities generally. He had no occasion to do so. But when the occasion once arose it was inevitable that the application would be made. What Elijah did was to claim for Yahweh a unique divinity, such a divinity as could not be attributed to Baal or any other rival deity.

The next stage in the development of the belief in the sole deity of Yahweh is represented by the eighth-century prophets. These men manifestly took the same attitude toward the heathen gods in general that Elijah did to Baal. They were not confronted with the necessity of insisting that the people choose between the worship of Yahweh and that of foreign deities. That question had been disposed of once for all by the work of Elijah, Elisha, and Jehu. But the appearance of Assyria in the west made it imperative that they point out the relation of Yahweh to this world-power and to other nations gen-

[36] *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. v, p. 654. The same view is also taken by H. G. Mitchell. See his *Ethics of the Old Testament*, p. 88.

erally. In doing so they did not look upon themselves as announcing anything new. What they said concerning Yahweh in this connection they assumed was already known to the people, or at least ought to have been. That he exercised authority over other nations as well as over Israel, was no new idea suggested by the approach of Assyria. A certain supernational character had attached to him from the beginning. This was implied in the thought that he was more powerful than the neighboring deities. It was also implied in the belief that Yahweh had chosen Israel, that his relation to Israel was not a purely natural one, but one founded on a free divine act. He might have chosen some other people, had he desired to do so. There was, therefore, nothing startlingly new in Amos' assumption that Yahweh had led the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir,[37] nor was there anything unheard of in Isaiah's representation of Assyria as the rod of Yahweh's anger and the staff of his indignation.[38] What these prophets did was simply to apply to new conditions, and to state more explicitly, what was already implied in the traditional conception of Yahweh. "The great events of Israel's history," as Davidson says, "did not suggest to the prophets their conceptions of Yahweh. On the contrary, their conceptions of Yahweh already held solved to them the enigma of the events that happened." [39]

In the prophetic conception of the universal rule of Yahweh it was manifestly implied that the heathen deities were not in the proper sense of the term deities at all. There is no explicit statement to this effect until we come

[37] 9. 7.
[38] 10. 5.
[39] *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 102.

to Jeremiah and Deuteronomy. In Jeremiah[40] the heathen deities are spoken of as "no gods," and in Deut. 4. 39 we read, "Know therefore this day, and lay it to thy heart, that Jehovah he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else." But the idea is clearly implicit in the eighth-century prophets. According to Isaiah, the whole earth was full of the glory of Yahweh,[41] and the entire spirit-world also belonged to him. "The Egyptians," he says, "are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit." [42] God and spirit are here synonymous terms, and both are by the context identified with Yahweh. He is God and spirit in an altogether unique sense. Isaiah nowhere takes any account of the gods of the Assyrians and Egyptians.[43] Both Hosea and he seem to have identified the heathen gods with their images. The images were lifeless, the work of men's hands; they were *elilim,* nonentities or worthless things.[44] And so, it may be presumed, the deities they represented were likewise regarded as lifeless and worthless. Some sort of existence apart from their images may have been allowed them, but, if so, it was an existence altogether devoid of religious significance. The eighth-century prophets were therefore practically monotheists, and this was, if anything, still more true of Jeremiah and the Deuteronomists. "Jehovah our God is one Jehovah" [45] ex-

[40] 2. 11; 16. 20.

[41] 6. 3.

[42] 31. 3.

[43] Chapter 19, in which reference is made to the idols of Egypt, is commonly assigned to later hands. If from Isaiah, it would confirm the view that he identified the heathen gods with their idols, for the same term (*elilim*) is here applied to them as to the images of Yahweh in 2. 8.

[44] Hos. 8. 6; Isa. 2. 8.

[45] Deut. 6. 4.

cluded, as we have seen, the thought of any other god.[46]

A still further development, however, of the monotheistic idea is found in Deutero-Isaiah. Here it is not only assumed or incidentally stated that Yahweh alone is God, but the thought is enlarged upon, asserted again and again, and enforced by arguments. One argument is drawn from prophecy. Yahweh is the only one who has proven himself able to predict the future. No other god has this power. The other deities, therefore, are not gods. They are "of nothing" and their work is "of nought." [47] In thus stressing prediction as a distinctive characteristic of divinity, Deutero-Isaiah was not thinking primarily of the miraculous element involved in it. Prediction, as he conceived it, was not merely a marvel pointing to a divine cause. It was a symbol and expression of the intelligence and moral purpose operative in the world. That Yahweh, and he alone, had the power of prediction was then evidence that he alone was the controlling force in human history, that he alone was its directing will. Another argument urged by Deutero-Isaiah in support of the sole godhead of Yahweh was based on his work as Creator. Over and over again the prophet recurs to this theme. "Who," he asks, "hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" [48] And the implied

[46] For this use of "one" see Zech. 14. 9; Song of Solomon 6. 9; and Job 33. 23.

[47] Isa. 41. 21-29.

[48] Isa. 40. 12.

answer is "Yahweh alone." He is the one who created the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth.[49] The unity of creation carries with it the unity and sole deity of the Creator. Yet another line of argumentation followed by Deutero-Isaiah consists in pointing out the absurdity of all idolatry. He identifies the heathen deity with its image, and then pours out all manner of contempt and ridicule upon the worship of these man-made images of wood and metal.[50] Deities thus worshiped were to his mind no deities at all.

It is sometimes said that the enthusiasm with which Deutero-Isaiah exploits the thought of Yahweh's sole deity points to its being a novel idea. But this, as we have seen, was not the case. It was not the novelty of the idea but the novelty of the situation that led to Deutero-Isaiah's stress on the sole godhead of Yahweh. During the exile the Israelites were brought face to face with the heathen world in a way that they had not been before. On every hand they were surrounded by heathen deities. Heathen worship was everywhere in evidence about them. They stood face to face with an imposing heathen civilization. If, then, in the presence of this seductive environment they were still to maintain their faith in Yahweh, they needed to have the conviction renewed that he alone was God. So time and again the great prophet of the exile recurs to this thought. "I am Jehovah, and there is none else; besides me there is no God. . . . Before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour. . . . There is no God else besides me, a just God and Saviour; there is none

[49] Isa. 42. 5; 44. 24; 45. 12, 18; 48. 13.

[50] 40. 18-20; 41. 6f.; 44. 9-20; 45. 20; 46. 1-2, 5-7.

besides me." [51] Here the name "Jehovah," or "Yahweh," ceases to have any special meaning and becomes the highest name of God.

In the postexilic period the unity of God became a firmly established doctrine, not only from the religious standpoint, but from the theological and speculative as well. The tendency at the same time arose to think of God as more and more transcendent in nature. Such names as "God of Heaven" and "Most High God" began to be regularly applied to him.[52] It also became customary to use the general name "God" instead of "Yahweh." But in spite of this increasingly pronounced monotheism the older particularistic methods of expression were not altogether discarded.[53] Other gods were still referred to as though they actually existed.[54] And some sort of existence apart from their idols seems at times to have been ascribed to them. They were in some instances apparently thought of as demons,[55] and in other cases appear to have been represented as divine beings of a subordinate rank whom Yahweh had appointed to be worshiped by heathen peoples. In Deut. 32. 8-9, departing from the text of the American Revised Version and substituting what was probably the original text, we read: "When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the children of men, he set the bounds of the peoples according to the number *of the sons of God;* but Yahweh's portion is his people; Jacob is the

[51] Isa. 45. 5; 43. 10-11; 45. 21.

[52] Ezra 6. 10; 7. 12; Neh. 2. 4, 20; Dan. 2. 18f.; 3. 26; Psa. 78. 56; 136. 26.

[53] Ruth 1. 15f.; 2. 12.

[54] Psa. 86. 8; 135. 5; 96. 4.

[55] Deut. 32. 17; Psa. 106. 37; compare 1 Cor. 10. 20f.; Rev. 9. 20.

lot of his inheritance." And in Deut. 4. 19 we read of the worship of the sun and the moon and the stars, "which Jehovah thy God hath allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven." Such conceptions as these arose from the desire to reconcile the supremacy of Yahweh with the fact of the widespread worship of other gods. They do not therefore in any way compromise the sole deity of Yahweh. Other gods, whatever form of existence may have been attributed to them, were regarded as wholly subject to his rule.

The thoroughgoing monotheism, in which the Old Testament thus culminated, had its roots, as we have seen, in the actual experience and practical needs of the people. Not speculation but the logic of events was the moving force in its development. Its history began with a great act of dedication to the newly found national Deity. Yahweh had marvelously delivered the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, and they in return had vowed to him their undying allegiance. In him they concentrated all their faith and hope. The new relationship thus established was an exclusive one. It was a love relation, and so would brook no rival. Other gods no doubt existed, but none of them might be put on a plane of equality with Yahweh without arousing his jealousy. He demanded the undivided loyalty of his people, and they in return, at least in their better moments, felt that he was able to meet all their needs. It was then inevitable, when their expanding life and thought brought them into ever closer contact with other nations, that they would eventually deny proper divinity and true existence to all other deities. The Tyrian Baal was first relegated to this position, and then shortly afterward other deities generally, until finally Yahweh was recognized as King of

kings and Lord of lords. The imperious heart of the Hebrew could tolerate no fundamental dualism or pluralism in its view of the universe. Its demand for an ultimate unity was as insistent as was the Greek intellect. But while the latter gave us a unity that aimed simply to satisfy the mind's demand for an ultimate explanation of the world, the former gave us a unity that met the demands of life as a whole, a unity to which heart, conscience, and intellect might adoringly turn and say, "Thy kingdom come and thy will be done." It is, then, no surprise that the monotheistic faith of the Hebrews rather than the monistic philosophy of the Greeks finally conquered the civilized world.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPIRITUALITY OF GOD

The word "spirituality" as applied to God has at least three distinct meanings. It means that God is a spirit as distinguished from material or physical existence. It means that he is free from the weakness of flesh, and is a supramundane power, superior to the forces of nature. It means also that there is an inner side to his personality, a rational and ethical side, and that it is here that his essential nature is to be found. He is not primarily substance or force, but a rational and ethical Being, who seeks to control men not by the sheer exercise of power but by appeal to their reason and intelligence, and who consequently, when worshiped, must be worshiped in spirit and in truth.

These three senses, in which the divine spirituality is affirmed, stand in a certain relation to each other. The second and third do not necessarily follow from the first, but they are naturally suggested by it and by the corresponding conceptions of the human spirit. Spirit as applied to man in the Old Testament did not simply mean the ethereal substance of which the soul was supposed to be composed. It also expressed both the idea of power and that of character. Spirit was the vital element in man, the source of energy. It was also the seat of the higher mental and moral life. Naturally, then, these ideas were carried over into the conception of the Divine Spirit, for our thought of God is modeled on our thought

of man. We first form some idea of our own spirit and then apply this to the Divine Spirit, making such changes as are required by the unique conditions and unique character of the Divine Life. These changes, however, do not alter the essential characteristics of spirit as realized in human life. Spirituality, both divine and human, is fundamentally the same. It has a threefold meaning, and involves a threefold antithesis, an antithesis to lumpish matter, to fleshly weakness, and to brute force.

The form under which spirit was originally conceived was apparently that of an ethereal substance, a refined or attenuated matter. The Latin word *spiritus,* from which our English word was derived, meant primarily breath or wind. And this was also the meaning of the corresponding Hebrew word *ruach.* Spirit did not then, to begin with, stand in complete antithesis to matter. It was not an "immaterial" form of existence. This highly abstract idea appears nowhere in either the Old or the New Testament. "The conception of an immaterial soul and the corresponding conception of an immaterial God have their origin in Plato." [1] And not until postbiblical times did they become the property of Hebrew and Christian thought. Spirit, as we find it in the Scriptures, was a rarefied form of matter. But this fact, while interesting from the philosophical point of view, did not seriously affect the actual distinction made between the material and the spiritual. Matter in its sublimated or spiritual form was so different from matter in its ordinary manifestations that there was felt to be a virtual antithesis between them.

In this connection the question naturally arises as to whether the Hebrews ever thought of God as having a

[1] G. F. Moore, *History of Religions,* vol. i, pp. 501f.

definite form. Spirit, as they conceived it, was not necessarily formless. It occupied space, and though usually invisible as the air, might have been regarded as having shape or form. The analogy of wind and breath, however, was unfavorable to this view. A certain formlessness belongs to these natural phenomena. And so it probably was with spirit as generally conceived. But nowhere in the Old Testament is it said that God was pure spirit, or even that he was *a* spirit. The Spirit of God is frequently spoken of, but the same expression was used of men. It is then possible that the human analogy was applied to God, and that he was thought of as *having* a spirit rather than *being* a spirit. In that case a quasi-physical form similar to that of the human body may have been attributed to him. And that this was the view of the early Hebrews is the contention of not a few scholars. When it is said that man was made in the image of God,[2] what the author had in mind, we are told, was the physical resemblance between man and God. The human body was patterned after the divine body. That God was thought of as having a human form is evident, it is claimed, from the fact that Old Testament writers speak of his hand, his arm, his eyes, his ears, his mouth, his lips; in short, the organs of the human body in general are ascribed to him. He is represented as walking in the garden in the cool of the day. Moses is permitted to see his back, though not his face.[3] Such expressions as these, it is contended, would not have been used if it had not been believed that the Deity had a physical form of some kind.

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[2] Gen. 1. *27*; 9. 6, P.

[3] Exod. 33. *20-23*, J; compare Num. 12. 8; Psa. 17. 15.

But in reply to these considerations it may be urged that the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament cannot in any case be taken in strict literalness. If God was looked upon as having a body, it must have been a very different kind of body from our own. "Doubtless," says H. P. Smith, "the body of Yahweh was conceived of as ethereal, not material like ours. It is a body of luminous matter, a 'glory,' so that the offerings must be sublimated by fire in order that he may receive the agreeable odor." [4] But such a body would from the biblical point of view be practically indistinguishable from spirit. It would have to be described as a spiritual body. And if so, the human analogy of body and soul manifestly fails as applied to the Deity, for it now turns out that the divine body and soul are identical in substance. Both are spiritual, that is, ethereal. And so God in the totality of his nature is, after all, a spiritual being.

It has already been pointed out that God is nowhere in the Old Testament said to be a spirit. But this fact has no special significance. The impression left by the Old Testament as a whole is that the divine spirituality was so generally recognized that it did not need to be affirmed. In Isa. 31. 3 it is, for instance, said that "the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit." God and spirit are here distinctly opposed to men and flesh. Indeed, the words "God" and "spirit" are treated as virtually synonymous. And that this was the general Old Testament conception can hardly be questioned. It is in this sense that the expression "Spirit of God" is to be understood. "This calling what is really God," says A. B. Davidson, "by the term the *Spirit of God* is the strongest proof that the idea of the

[4] *The Religion of Israel*, p. 99. See Gen. 8. 20-22, J.

spirituality of God underlay the idea of *God*." [5] No doubt spirit was often conceived very crudely. The Hebrews were not given to reflection on such matters. They accepted the current ideas concerning spirit and spiritual beings without any effort to reduce them to philosophical consistency. But the physical images and materialistic expressions used of the Deity were wholly subordinate to the thought of his true spirituality. And the tendency in Old Testament teaching was more and more to *de-materialize* the conception of spirit. As the thought of God and his greatness grew, it was inevitable that a more refined view of spirit should come to prevail. At first a quasi-human form may have been attributed to Yahweh, but later this was felt to be inconsistent with his exalted character. When he revealed himself on Mount Sinai the people heard a voice but saw no form.[6] This was regarded as evidence that no material image could properly represent him. He was essentially formless, "without body or parts." Pure immateriality was not, as we have seen, ascribed to him. But he was nevertheless in at least the later stages of Hebrew thought regarded as completely superior to the limits of time and space.[7]

Thus far we have considered the Spirit of God from what might be termed the metaphysical point of view, as a substance. But it was not this aspect of the divine spirituality that especially interested the Hebrews. What appealed to them in connection with spirit was the idea of power. Originally, spirit meant breath. But where there is breath, there is life and strength. Consequently, at a

[5] *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 125.
[6] Deut. 4. 12, 15.
[7] Psa. 139. 7ff.; 90. 4.

very early date the idea of vitality and power came to be connected with that of spirit. In man spirit was opposed to flesh. And this antithesis was still further accentuated in the case of the Divine Spirit. The Spirit of God stood opposed to all material and fleshly existence. The latter was weak and dependent, destined to pass away; the former was the creative energy of the world, transcendental, independent, self-existent. It is this idea that is emphasized in the above verse quoted from Isaiah. The Egyptians were men and their horses flesh. They were not, therefore, to be relied upon. For opposed to them stood God and spirit, the invisible principle that guides the course of human history.

In this dynamic conception of the divine spirituality it is implied that God stood apart from the material world. He was not contained in it, but was above it. He might use the forces of nature, but he was identified with none of them. He might make the nations of the world his instruments;[8] indeed, they had no power independently of him;[9] but he was not limited to such means in order to accomplish his purpose. He could intervene in human affairs in a miraculous way. And so there was a tendency to contrast the Divine Spirit with human might, "Not by might," we read, "nor by power, but by my spirit, saith Jehovah." [10] And Judah, we are told, is to be saved not "by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen," but by Yahweh their God.[11] A distinctly idealistic element was thus introduced into Israelitic thought. Other forces, it was seen, have to be reckoned with besides material strength. There is an unseen spiritual power that may at any time upset the cal-

[8] Isa. 10. 5.
[9] Isa. 10. 15.
[10] Zech. 4. 6.
[11] Hos. 1. 7.

culations of men. Military strength and material prosperity have in them no certain guarantees for the future. Providence is by no means always on the side of the heaviest artillery. Over and above all these material forces is an invisible Spirit directing the course of affairs. Men need not, therefore, be discouraged by the unideal conditions of life. These conditions will not last forever. For at the helm of the universe there is a personal will, stronger than the arm of flesh, more powerful than insentient matter, which in due time will bring to pass its own purposes.

This brings us to the third sense in which the spirituality of God is taught in the Old Testament, the subjective or ethical sense. The Divine Spirit is substance and power, especially the latter. But spirit as applied to God is also the Spirit of holiness, an ethical Spirit. It happens that the expression "holy Spirit" occurs but three times in the Old Testament;[12] and only twice is the Divine Spirit spoken of as "good." [13] But the idea thus expressed was, of course, involved in the moral character of Yahweh. The Spirit of God was as ethical as God himself. As the thought of God was gradually moralized, so was that of his Spirit.

In the time of the Judges the Spirit of God was associated with extraordinary physical strength and unusual gifts of military leadership. The remarkable achievements of Samson, Gideon, Jephthah, and Saul were all ascribed to the Divine Spirit.[14] And it is probable that

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[12] Psa. 51. 11; Isa. 63. 10, 11.
[13] Neh. 9. 20; Psa. 143. 10.
[14] Judg. 14. 6; 6. 34; 11. 29; 1 Sam. 11. 6.

the ascription of prophecy to the Spirit of God was at first due to the excited demeanor of the prophets rather than to the ethical character of their utterances. We read, for instance, in 1 Sam. 18. 10, that "an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house." "Prophesied" here evidently refers to the extraordinary deportment of the king, his raving. It was this external aspect of prophecy that seems to have first attracted the attention of men. It, however, gradually subsided, and in its place there came into the foreground that powerful moral conviction which the prophets themselves were persuaded was born of the Spirit of God. "I am full of power," says Micah, "by the Spirit of Jehovah, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin." [15] The supreme test of the Spirit's presence is now the moral test. What characterizes the Spirit-filled Messiah is "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah." [16] "To preach good tidings unto the meek; . . . to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening *of the prison* to them that are bound" [17]—such are the fruits of the Spirit. All the highest elements in human life are due to the Spirit of God.[18] From this it necessarily follows that the Divine Spirit itself is essentially intellectual and moral in character. It is a "holy spirit," a "good spirit," a "spirit of knowledge." The element of power is not excluded from it, but the power it represents is no longer selfishly or capriciously exercised. It is a rational and moral power, a power with whom the individual man may hold

[15] Mic. 3. 8.
[16] Isa. 11. 2.
[17] Isa. 61. 1.
[18] Exod. 31. 2-3, P; Job 32. 8.

communion, a power so rich in its fellowship with men that the devout heart instinctively exclaims,

"Whom have I in heaven *but thee*?
And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." [19]

The lofty conceptions which were thus associated with the spirituality of Yahweh are significant in and of themselves. But what especially interests us in connection with them is their bearing on the religious life and worship of the Israelites. And here there are three lines of influence to be particularly noted: the effect on sacrificial worship, on the localization of Yahweh, and on the use of images. What the effect in each of these instances should have been, is clear enough from the abstract point of view. In so far as Yahweh was looked upon as a transcendent Being, superior to the limits of time and space, in so far as he was regarded as of a purely ethereal nature, free from material needs, in so far as he was thought to be in his inmost essence a rational and moral Being; in a word, in so far as he was genuinely spiritual, it is manifest that sacrifices in and of themselves could have no value for him, that his presence could not be confined to any particular place or region, and that no material image could properly represent him to the thought and imagination of men. But in actual life the situation was not so simple. Sacrifices, sacred places, and images had had their place in religion from the most ancient times. They had been legislated into the very structure of worship. Through the force of habit they had acquired a momentum which caused them to persist long after the original reason for their institution had been forgotten. We

[19] Psa. 73. 25.

must not, then, expect that the higher ideas of God current in Israel from the time of Moses on would work themselves out at once into practice. There would necessarily be long periods of concession and compromise, before people came to see that the older customs and the newer ideas were essentially irreconcilable, and that the former must yield to the latter. Perfect harmony between religious practice and religious thought is consequently not to be looked for. In a developing society practice as a rule lags far behind thought. And so it was in Israel. The essential spirituality of Yahweh may have been apprehended early in the history of Israel, indeed, from the very outset; and yet it may not have been until centuries later that its logical consequences were wrought out in life and practice.

The custom of offering sacrifices continued throughout the entire Old Testament period. In one sense the custom was not inconsistent with spiritual religion. Sacrifices might be regarded as mere outward tokens of gratitude and devotion, and hence might be in complete harmony with a thoroughly rational and ethical worship. This was apparently the attitude taken by the early literary prophets. These men did not, as some scholars maintain, denounce sacrifices as such. What they condemned was sacrifices offered as a substitute for righteousness. And in this sense they also condemned prayer.[20] A purely formal prayer was as worthless in their sight as a purely formal sacrifice.[21] Neither had any value in and of itself. Yet both might be helpful as outward expressions of a true inner piety. At least nothing was said by the early prophets that is necessarily inconsistent with this view.

[20] Isa. 1. 15.
[21] Isa. 29. 13.

But this was not the attitude taken by the Hebrews in general toward sacrifices. They looked upon these outward rites as an essential element in the worship of Yahweh. This was true both of the early popular religion and the later legal religion. It may be that in early times the Hebrews shared to some extent the primitive belief that the Deity himself actually partook of the sacrificial offering, deriving a kind of physical satisfaction from it. We read, for instance, in one passage that "Jehovah smelled the sweet savor" of Noah's sacrifice, and so said in his heart that he would not again curse the ground for man's sake.[22] But while this conception in a strictly literal sense may have had some currency in Israel, there is no evidence that it was ever widely held. The prevailing view seems to have been that sacrifices had been divinely established as a means of communion with the Deity, and hence must be observed. There may originally have been some mysterious reason for the institution, but primarily it rested upon the divine will. This was at least the view that prevailed during the later legal period. It represents a distinct advance beyond the crudely materialistic conception of an earlier day. But it is still an unspiritual view, for in its last analysis it bases sacrifice upon an arbitrary act of the divine will. No adequate rational or ethical reason for the institution is given. And an institution so founded by its very nature violates the inner principle of the divine spirituality, for this principle permits religion to require of men only such a service as is rational and ethical. This idea the prophets, as we have seen, clearly grasped, and so did some of the psalmists.[23] But the later ecclesiastical system stood in the way

[22] Gen. 8. 21, J.
[23] Psa. 51. 16.

of its complete recognition. The result was that the practice of sacrifice continued as an unspiritual force, until it was finally brought to an end by the work of Jesus and Paul.

The tendency to localize Yahweh grew up partly out of inherited customs and beliefs and partly out of the felt need of giving concreteness to the idea of his presence. Sinai or Horeb seems to have been originally regarded as in a special sense his home.[24] Later the land of Canaan,[25] and especially the individual sanctuaries in the land,[26] were looked upon as his dwelling place. But his residence in these three places did not exclude the thought of his presence elsewhere, and particularly the thought of his residence in heaven. It is argued by Stade[27] that the latter idea was unknown during the preprophetic period; that, in fact, it did not originate until the time of Ezekiel. But in this he is certainly mistaken. We read in the J document of Yahweh's coming "down" upon Mount Sinai, and of his going "down" to see the tower of Babel, and "down" to ascertain the real situation at Sodom and Gomorrah.[28] It is here manifestly implied that Yahweh's customary abode was in heaven above. And this is also the implication of other early passages.[29] "According to the whole Old Testament, God dwells in heaven." [30] From there he visits the children of men and

[24] Judg. 5. 4f.; 1 Kings 19. 8.

[25] 1 Sam. 26. 19; 2 Kings 17, 18, 23; Hos. 8. 1; 9. 3, 15; Jer. 2. 7.

[26] Gen. 21. 14, 17; 28. 16f. JE; Amos 1. 2.

[27] *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments*, pp. 103f.

[28] Exod. 19. 11b, 20a; Gen. 11. 5, 7; 18. 21.

[29] Gen. 19. 24, J; 21. 17; 28. 12, 17, E.

[30] Piepenbring, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 26. See Westphal, *Jahwes Wohnstätten nach den Anschauungen der alten Hebräer.*

manifests himself at particular places.[31] To these places he was not bound in a fetishistic sense. Yet his connection with them and with the land of Canaan as a whole was closer than seems to us consistent with his true spirituality. This connection, however, was due not so much to a defective view of God on the part of the Hebrews as it was to their limited knowledge of the world and the limited range of their sympathy. Hence as their knowledge and sympathy broadened they naturally detached Yahweh more and more from his connection with the land of Canaan. Especially did the exile and the dispersion of the Jews contribute to this end. But the movement in this direction did not attain its completion in the Old Testament. There lingered to the last traces at least of an unspiritual connection between Yahweh and the sacred places of the past (compare John 4. 20f.).

A special word in this connection needs to be added concerning the ark and the temple. It has recently been argued with a good deal of ingenuity and considerable plausibility that the traditional view, that there was but one ark, is erroneous;[32] there were many arks, every important sanctuary having one. Where we now read in the early literature of the "ephod and teraphim," the original reading, we are told, was "ark and teraphim." It was the Deuteronomistic editors who introduced the change into the text. Their purpose in so doing was to remove from the early historical documents everything inconsistent with the idea that there was but one ark, and so to establish in the early history of Israel a point of support for the Deuteronomic centralization of worship

[32] W. R. Arnold, *Ephod and Ark: A Study in the Records and Religion of the Ancient Hebrews.*

[31] Exod. 20. 24.

in Jerusalem. Should this theory prove correct, it would probably detract somewhat from the importance of the ark in the early religion of Israel, but it would not appreciably affect its bearing on the spirituality of Yahweh, the point with which we are at present concerned. This bearing would be practically the same, whether the ark was one or many.

Accepting the common view that there was but one ark, and that it was the work of Moses, we find a considerable diversity of opinion as to its original character. According to the biblical account,[33] it was a sacred box containing the tables of the law. Some modern scholars regard this as impossible because of what they believe to be the late date of the Decalogue. Hence they substitute for the tables of the law a meteoric stone or stones.[34] These stones had come down from heaven. They were consequently sacred, and were believed to embody in some realistic way the divine presence. Others take the view that the ark was a portable throne on which Yahweh was seated.[35] But whatever its exact character, there can be no doubt that it was regarded in early times as not only a symbol of the divine presence but as an objectification and guarantee of it.[36] Far more so than any other sacred object it made real the presence of Yahweh. And hence the sanctuaries where it was kept, those at Shiloh and Jerusalem, were accorded a certain preeminence over others. After the ark, however, was installed in the

[33] Deut. 10. 1-5.

[34] Stade, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments*, p. 117.

[35] Martin Dibelius, *Die Lade Jahves;* Gressmann, *Mose und seine Zeit*, pp. 449ff. See 1 Sam. 4. 4; 2 Sam. 6. 2.

[36] Num. 10. 35f.; 14. 42ff., E; 1 Sam. 3. 3; 4. 3ff.; 5. 7ff.; 6. 19; 2 Sam. 6. 1ff.

temple at Jerusalem, interest in it seems to have declined. In the older historical books no mention is made of it after 1 Kings 8. 1ff. What finally became of it we do not know. It was probably destroyed with the temple or carried away by Nebuchadrezzar. In Deuteronomy very little significance attaches to the ark as such. Interest centers almost wholly in the tables of stone contained in it. And Jeremiah goes still farther in divesting it of its earlier religious importance. He declares that after the restoration of the people "they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more." [37]

The temple at Jerusalem owed its preeminence partly to the presence of the ark, but especially to the fact that it was the royal sanctuary. Its importance was considerably lessened by the division of the monarchy. But after the fall of the northern kingdom and the remarkable deliverance from Sennacherib it became again, and in a new and heightened sense, the religious center of the Hebrew people. Isaiah had on two notable occasions, in B. C. 735 and 701, announced the inviolability of Jerusalem. By this he did not mean that the city would never be destroyed. What he meant was that it would survive the particular perils that confronted it at these two crises of its history. A later age, however, understood his words in an absolute sense. In the time of Jeremiah the people gathered about the temple crying, "The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, are these." [38] the implication being that the sacred buildings and the surrounding city were inviolable, and so perfectly

[37] Jer. 3. 16.
[38] Jer. 7. 4.

safe, no matter what or how great the threatening danger might be. The fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586 brought a rude shock to this faith. But after the return from the exile and the rebuilding of the temple it revived. Jerusalem became again a fixed point in the divine economy. In all the pictures of the future it occupied a central place, and the divine presence was in a unique way connected with it. There is one passage in the Old Testament that seems to represent a higher standpoint. In Isa. 66. 1-2 Yahweh apparently declares that he has no interest in the rebuilding of the temple, that what he is alone concerned about is the man "that is poor and of a contrite spirit." So contrary is this to the teaching of the Old Testament as a whole that most commentators think that the reference here must be to some schismatic temple such as that erected on Mount Gerizim. But if so, it is strange that there should be nothing in the text to indicate the fact. On the other hand, it will have to be admitted that, if the passage was intended as a protest against the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, it remained altogether ineffective. Not until the time of Stephen[39] was it used as a polemic against the temple-worship. Before that time, however, Jesus had already declared in words whose import could not be mistaken that the hour was at hand when neither on Mount Gerizim nor at Jerusalem should men worship the Father. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."[40]

Sacrifices and a certain localization of the divine presence maintained, as we have seen, their place throughout the Old Testament period. The Jews apparently saw

[39] Acts 7. 48-50.

[40] John 4. 21, 24.

in them nothing necessarily inconsistent with the spirituality of God. But not so with the use of images. From a very early time the feeling was current in Israel that Yahweh was so great a Being, so far removed from fleshly weakness, so elevated above everything material, that it was an offense to him to be worshiped by means of images. This feeling grew in strength until finally it culminated in an iconoclastic movement that brought about the complete abolition of images from Israelitic worship. So characteristic did this feature of Old Testament religion become that all heathen worship came to be identified with idolatry.

The history of the anti-image movement in Israel is one concerning which there is considerable difference of opinion. Especially is this true of its earlier stages. Hebrew tradition carries the prohibition of images back to Moses, and makes it second in importance only to the commandment not to worship other gods. But the practice of the Hebrews during the period of the Judges and for several centuries subsequently was so out of harmony with the second commandment of the Decalogue that many modern scholars have concluded that this commandment, and, indeed, the entire Decalogue, cannot be Mosaic, but must come from a much later date. It was Hosea, they hold, who first made an issue of image-worship. The new movement begun by him gained headway rapidly, and a century later culminated in the Deuteronomic reform. From that time on, except for a brief relapse after the death of Josiah, Israelitic worship was imageless.

The reason for making Hosea the originator of the iconoclastic movement is that he, so far as we know, was the first to ridicule and scoff at the worship of images.

The idols, he said, were man-made. There was nothing divine about them. They were simply calves. And that men should actually kiss such images seemed to him the height of absurdity.[41] But this very attitude on his part implies that his antipathy to images was nothing new. Had it been, he would have approached the subject in a quite different spirit. He would have sought to instruct the people and to prepare their minds for the new teaching. The fact that he instead bursts out into condemnation and ridicule is itself evidence that his message was not new, but had its support in the accepted tradition. The truth is, as has already been pointed out, that the prophets nowhere represent themselves as innovators. They were reformers, and were simply seeking to restore the better conditions of an earlier day. In so doing they no doubt at the same time made an advance, and an important advance. But this advance consisted not so much in the promulgation of new ideas as in the clarification and deepening of convictions already present. The very success achieved by the prophets would have been impossible if their teaching had not had its roots in the past. Had the antipathy to image-worship begun with Hosea, it is in the highest degree improbable that it would have become the law of the land a century later. A much longer period was needed to prepare for such a movement as the Deuteronomic reform. Then, too, in Exod. 20. 23 and 34. 17, which are admittedly pre-Hoseanic, *molten* images are expressly forbidden. That this implied that the use of *graven* images was permitted, is a wholly gratuitous assumption. Hosea recognizes no distinction between molden and graven images.[42] One with him in-

[41] Hos. 8. 4, 6; 13. 2.

[42] 11. 2; 13. 2.

volved the other. And so it must have been before his time. What Hosea did was simply to bring the earlier antipathy to images to clearer self-consciousness and to give to it an edge and dynamic power that seems to have been previously lacking.

At what time previous to Hosea the anti-image sentiment in Israel arose cannot be determined with certainty. But there is no conclusive reason why it should not, in accordance with the uniform tradition of Scripture, be carried back to Moses. The objections to this view are chiefly two: the silence of Elijah and Elisha, and the earlier common and unrebuked use of images.[43] Both of these objections, however, may be met without serious difficulty. That Elijah and Elisha did not attack the calf-worship of the northern realm is not strange in view of the far more serious task which confronted them. In their day the very existence of the religion of Yahweh was at stake. It was a question whether he or Baal was to be recognized as God. In the presence of this supreme question minor matters, having to do simply with the manner of worship, naturally sank out of view. For Elijah and Elisha to have raised the question of image-worship might have been to confuse the main issue. It does not, then, follow from their silence that they approved of the calf-worship. Indeed, our records of their work are so scanty that we do not even know that they did not express disapproval of it.

The use of images in early Israel is no more difficult of explanation than the similar practice in the Christian Church. The parallel in the two cases is interesting.[44] The Christians accepted the second commandment and be-

[43] Judg. 8. 24ff.; 17-18; 1 Sam. 19. 12ff.; 1 Kings 12. 28f.

[44] See J. P. Peters, *The Religion of the Hebrews*, p. 104.

gan as an imageless church. But gradually through the influence of their heathen environment they fell into image-worship, and in so doing seemed to be unconscious of a breach of the Decalogue. The second commandment they apparently interpreted as directed against *heathen* idol-worship. Images representative of other gods they condemned, but images representative of their own God and their saints they placed in a different category and seemed to regard as perfectly proper. Thus they finally developed a practical polytheism. And so it was in Israel. Moses forbade the use of images and gave the people, instead, the ark as a symbol and guarantee of the divine presence. Where the ark was kept, namely, at Shiloh and Jerusalem, the worship seems to have been imageless. But elsewhere, through Canaanitic influence, images were gradually introduced. As representative of other gods they would have been rejected as inconsistent with the Mosaic tradition. But when connected with the worship of Yahweh the feeling apparently was that there was nothing wrong in them. In this way idolatrous practices grew up in Israel and continued in vogue until finally the prophetic reform, a movement similar to that of the Protestant Reformation, swept them away. We thus see that there is nothing in the history of Israel that necessarily precludes the view that the antipathy to image-worship dates from the time of Moses.

We need not, however, hold that the Mosaic prohibition of images rested upon the same insight into the spirituality of Yahweh that we find in the eighth-century prophets. The mere fact of the prohibition manifestly implies that the Mosaic conception of God was in some regards higher, more spiritual, than that of the Egyptians and other neighboring peoples. On the other hand, the stress placed

on the ark is evidence that Yahweh was still connected in an unspiritual way with a material object. People as a rule probably saw no important difference between the ark and an image. If Yahweh could be represented by the former, there was no inherent reason why he might not be represented by the latter. Before the prohibition of images could be placed on an adequate basis, it was necessary that such a conception of the transcendence of Yahweh and of his essentially ethical character be attained as would preclude the possibility of his representation by any material object. And this is the view that we find in the literary prophets, especially in Deutero-Isaiah. Over and over again the latter pours his pitiless scorn on all attempts to represent the Divine Being by means of any material image.[45]

To the pure intellectualist and pantheist this iconoclastic spirit may seem fanatical. Why not, it is asked, concede the use of images to ignorant people as an aid to their imagination? The images are, of course, not divine, but they may be helpful as symbols of the divine presence. Such has always been the apology for idolatry. But the Hebrew prophets would hear none of it. With an almost unique religious insight they saw the inevitable perils of such a position, and set their faces like flint against it. Idols to them were simply idols, and nothing more. Between them and Yahweh there could be no connection. The gulf between the two was impassable. On the one hand was pure spirit, on the other man-made images of wood and stone, gold and silver. God needed no such material forms through which to reach the minds of men. He was spirit, and could speak directly to the

[45] Isa. 40. 18-20; 41. 6-7; 44. 9-20; 45. 20; 46. 1-2, 5-7.

spirit of man. Indeed, the spirit of man, we are told, is the candle of the Lord.[46] It is here that we see the immense practical importance of the doctrine of the Divine Spirit. It is for this reason that the Spirit of God figures so prominently in Scripture. It stands opposed to the irrationality of idolatry and the mummery of ceremonialism.

The question is sometimes raised as to whether the Spirit is anywhere in the Old Testament conceived of as a distinct Person. There was, as we have already seen, a tendency in that direction, but only a tendency.[47] The great truth with which the Old Testament as a whole was concerned was not the personality of the Divine Spirit, but the spirituality of the Divine Person.

[46] Prov. 20. 27.

[47] See p. 77.

CHAPTER V

THE POWER OF GOD

If Schleiermacher was right in defining religion as "the feeling of absolute dependence," it is evident that power is a fundamental attribute in the religious conception of God. What first awakened the religious impulse was the consciousness of a power not of ourselves, on which we are dependent. And what has through the ages kept religion alive has been the belief that this power might in one way or another be made to serve our ends. It is conceivable that a different attitude might have been taken to the invisible power by which we are surrounded. Bertrand Russell, for instance, in an eloquent passage thus expresses himself: "Brief and powerless is man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces which tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the

trampling march of unconscious power." [1] But the attitude thus expressed is a highly artificial one. What alone makes such a view possible is the fact that the ideals of life have as a result of the nurture received from religion attained a *quasi*-independence. They are seen to have an inherent worth of their own, and so are thought to be detachable from the faith that gave them birth. They may even, as here, take a defiant attitude toward the basal power of the universe; but the dualism thus created in our thought-life is not one in which the human mind could long rest. Our ideals must be regarded as rooted in reality, or they will fade away. The power not ourselves must be looked upon as friendly to our strivings, or these strivings will themselves, in at least their higher and more difficult forms, cease. Power and human need go together. Human need requires a power on which it may lean; and this power in turn must be not only friendly but also adequate to human need. Power in our thought of God is quite as basal as love, and originally it was the more distinctive factor. This is illustrated by the Hebrew word for God, *El* or *Elohim,* the root of which probably meant "to be strong." Strength was the primary characteristic of Deity.

In our discussion of the personality, unity, and spirituality of God we have already dwelt to some extent upon the power of Yahweh. Power is so basal an attribute that it is to some degree involved in all the others. But certain special aspects of the subject still remain to be considered, and these we take up in the present chapter.

It is frequently asserted that Yahweh was at the outset a war god. And it is true that in our earliest records he appears to a large extent in this light. He is spoken of

[1] *Philosophical Essays,* p. 70.

as "a man of war." [2] An early collection of songs was called "The Book of the Wars of Yahweh." [3] Israel's enemies were his enemies;[4] Israel's wars were his wars;[5] Israel's armies were his armies.[6] The title "Yahweh of hosts" was interpreted as meaning "God of the armies of Israel." [7] The ark, with which the presence of Yahweh was in a unique way connected, was a battle standard as well as a sanctuary.[8] The camp of Israel was sacred to Yahweh.[9] Men dedicated themselves to battle as to a religious service. The military leaders were in a special sense the agents of Yahweh, controlled by his spirit. But while Yahweh was thus in the early history of Israel closely connected with war, it is a mistake to suppose that his power was limited to the battlefield. He was not a god of war in the sense that the other interests of life lay beyond his province. It is frequently stated that Yahweh had at first nothing to do with the private concerns of the individual or with the soil and its products. These were left to the household gods and the local *numina*. But for this view there is no adequate basis. No doubt local *numina* and household gods continued to be worshiped in Israel after the time of Moses, but this was due rather to the force of habit and custom than to the belief that Yahweh was limited to any particular field or form of activity. From the beginning he was God of Israel, and sole God of Israel. No partition of the life of

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[2] Exod. 15. 3.
[3] Num. 21. 14, E.
[4] 1 Sam. 30. 26.
[5] Exod. 17. 15f., E; Judg. 5. 23; 1 Sam. 18. 17; 25. 28.
[6] 1 Sam. 17. 26, 36.
[7] 1 Sam. 17. 45.
[8] 1 Sam. 4. 3-11; Num. 10. 35f., E.
[9] Deut. 23. 9, 14.

the nation was made; the whole of it was under his control. The reason why he seems more closely connected with war than other lines of activity is that wars were at first the supreme interest of the nation. Israel had the task of conquering Canaan, and then consolidating their newly won territory against hostile attacks both from within and without. This task engaged the energies of the nation for several centuries, and during this time it was inevitable that the battlefield should be the place where the divine presence would be most urgently sought and the divine help most clearly perceived. But this by no means implies that either the power or interest of Yahweh was limited to war.

It may be added that what has been said of the conception of Yahweh as a war god holds true also of the view that he was originally a storm god or volcano god. Yahweh is often associated with lightning and thunder, and volcanic phenomena.[10] But all this means is that it was such striking natural phenomena as these that seemed to the ancient Hebrews to be the most impressive manifestations of the divine power. Yahweh's power was no more limited to these phenomena than it was to the battlefield.[11]

Another error into which writers on the Old Testament not infrequently fall is that of assuming that Yahweh was at the outset so closely identified with the nation that his power was hardly more than commensurate with

[10] Exod. 19. 16ff., JE; 20. 18ff., E; 1 Kings 19. 11f.; Psa. 18. 13f.; 29. 3ff.

[11] In an interesting article on "Beginnings of Hebrew Monotheism—The Ineffable Name," in the *Methodist Review*, 1902, pp. 24-35, President W. F. Warren argues that "Yah," the original form of "Yahweh," was the West-Semitic form of the East-Semitic or Proto-Semitic *Ea*, the God of waters, citing in support of this view the numerous water-miracles attributed to Yahweh.

that of the people themselves. He was limited geographically as they were. When they were defeated in battle he was defeated. When they were victorious, he was victorious. His achievements were limited by theirs. This was a not uncommon view of the relation of a tribal deity to his people, and no doubt it had some currency in Israel. The very fact that Yahweh was worshiped by the Israelites alone would seem to imply that his rule was limited to them. David, for instance, is represented as saying that for him to be driven out of his native land was equivalent to being forced to serve other gods.[12] And this method of expression appears also in so late a book as that of Ruth. The Moabitess here says to her mother-in-law, as she resolves to accompany her to Judah, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Removal to another country meant to her a change of religion. This was the common view of antiquity, and it seems to have been held by the early Israelites as well as by others. But while this fact *seems* to involve a geographical limitation of Yahweh's power, it did not necessarily do so. In the early patriarchal narratives Yahweh is represented as manifesting himself to his servants wherever they might be, in Egypt or the distant East.[13] However much he might be attached to the promised land and to sacred places in it, he was not bound in an exclusive sense to it. From the beginning there was something transcendent about his nature, something that resisted every tendency to restrict him to a particular place or to identify him in an absolute way with his own people. He was from the outset supernational, and in a true sense also supramundane.

[12] 1 Sam. 26. 19; compare Gen. 4. 14, J.

[13] Gen. 12. 1; 24. 12ff.; 26. 12ff., J; 46. 4, E.

The key to the early theology of the Hebrews is to be found in the distinction between their practical postulates and their theoretical beliefs. The latter were vague, unsettled, and imperfect. Thought at that time was so undeveloped and knowledge so limited that one could hardly expect clear conceptions of the world, of God, and of their relation to each other. Questions concerning the nature of God and the extent of his power had very little interest for the early Israelites. They did not reflect enough on matters of this kind to feel the intellectual necessity of asserting the absoluteness of God, his omnipotence, omniscence, and omnipresence; and there was, of course, no accepted teaching on the subject that had been handed down to them. The result is that we find in the Old Testament not a few expressions and beliefs that seem to imply very distinct limitations of Yahweh's being and power. The admitted existence of other gods would seem clearly to limit the extent of his power. His abode in heaven and his localization at Sinai, Zion, and other sanctuaries would seem to restrict the range of his being. Such statements as those in Gen. 11. 5 (J) and 18. 21 (J), where Yahweh is represented as going down to the tower of Babel and Sodom, in order to ascertain the true situation, seem plainly to imply a limitation of his knowledge. And so the anthropomorphic expressions in general of the preprophetic period seem to rule out the thought of the divine absoluteness.

But while all this is true from the theoretical point of view, the situation is quite different from the practical or religious standpoint. Such limitations and imperfections as seem to have characterized the early intellectual conceptions of Yahweh's power formed, so far as we can see, no conscious barrier to faith itself. The early Israel-

ite from the beginning felt that he had in Yahweh one who would meet all his needs. "Is anything," he asked, "too hard for Jehovah?[14] "There is no restraint to Jehovah," said Jonathan to his armor-bearer, "to save by many or by few.[15] Yahweh was able to do whatever he wished. For all practical purposes he was omnipotent. He could do whatever the Hebrews needed to have done. He also knew all they needed to know. Numerous incidents are recorded that reveal his supernatural wisdom and power. The very existence of the priestly oracle implies that it was believed that he knew all hidden and future things. As the Israelite approached Yahweh in prayer there was no consciousness of any limitation of his knowledge or power or presence. To the believing heart he was absolute.

This does not mean that the early Hebrew had a clear conception of Yahweh's unlimited power. Various facts already cited imply the contrary. It means simply that he was believed to be equal to all the needs of his people. These needs did not call for a Deity who was absolute in the theological sense of the term; and hence there are, as we have seen, in the early literature of the Old Testament statements that seem to limit his power and being. But these limitations were primarily due, not to the nature of Yahweh, but to the needs of the people. There was nothing in the conception of Yahweh itself that necessarily limited him to Canaan or to any particular people. It was the historic conditions that imposed these limitations. The Hebrews as yet felt no need of a universal Deity. When they finally did, Yahweh proved equal to the need. There was something elastic, expansive about

[14] Gen. 18. 14, J.
[15] 1 Sam. 14. 6.

the Mosaic conception of Yahweh that made it impossible that he should be permanently limited to a single nation. He was from the outset, as Jastrow says, "a national Deity largely in name only." "The limitations to his scope and jurisdiction" were "circumstantial rather than essential, so that the Prophets obeyed a correct instinct in attaching their conception of a universal power to the God of Moses." [16]

"In early [Semitic] heathenism," says Robertson Smith, "the really vital question is not what a god has power to do, but whether I can get him to do it for me, and this depends on the relation in which he stands to me." [17] If the relation is intimate and profound, there is hardly any limit to what the worshiper may ask and expect of his god. But this question of one's relation to the Deity is just the uncertain factor in early religion. And here it is that the unique religious genius of early Israel manifests itself. The relation established between Yahweh and Israel was so deep, so firm, so intense, that it was able to bear the strain of every crisis through which the nation was forced to pass. And it was made so durable because it was founded not on any formal or authoritative teaching, but on a great experience, a mighty act of deliverance, which evoked from the people so deep a gratitude and loyalty that there was no limit to the confidence they reposed in their God. That this confidence did not at first rest upon a clear conception of Yahweh's unlimited power is not strange, nor is it significant. The significant thing in the early religion of Israel was not the imperfect beliefs about God, but the passionate devotion to him, which led the people to feel that there was no limit to his power

[16] *Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions*, p. 282.
[17] *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 83.

to help those who believed in him. It was this devotion to him that was the moving-force in Israel's religious development. This devotion was also a more or less constant factor throughout the entire Old Testament period. It is for this reason that so distinguished and openminded a scholar as A. B. Davidson was able to say after a lifetime of study that it was his impression "that even in the most ancient passages of the Old Testament essentially the same thought of Yahweh is to be found as appears in the Prophets and the later literature." [18] The "thought of Yahweh," of which this statement is true, was that practical religious conception of his nature and power involved in loyal devotion to him. This conception remained virtually constant throughout. What developed was its theoretical implications. And here we come upon two interesting and disputed questions. When did Yahweh, God of Israel, first come to be regarded as creator of the world? and when did he come to be looked upon as the sole controlling force in human history?

These two questions are manifestly related to each other. The first would seem logically to involve the second. If Yahweh was the creator of the world, it would seem that his rule in the world must be universal. But as a matter of fact such was not the view of antiquity. The idea that a certain God was creator of heaven and earth did not necessarily exclude the existence of other gods. These other gods were no doubt looked upon as less powerful than the Creator-God, but they were none the less real, and each had his own province in human life. In Babylonian mythology Ea, the water-god; Enlil, the storm-god; and Marduk, the sun-god were each at dif-

[18] *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 180.

ferent times looked upon as the creator of everything. But this did not exclude the existence of a vast pantheon, nor did it exclude the idea that other peoples were ruled by their own gods. The conception of Yahweh as creator did not, then, necessarily include the thought of his universal rule. The latter idea may quite possibly have originated later than the former. In any case it is best to discuss the two separately.

We begin with the idea of the creatorship of Yahweh. It was Deutero-Isaiah who first gave to this conception profound religious significance. He made it a fundamental article of belief. Again and again he comes back to it. "Who," he asks, "hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span? . . . Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number. . . . Thus saith God Jehovah, he that createth the heavens, and stretcheth them forth; he that spread abroad the earth and that which cometh out of it. . . . I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens; and all their host have I commanded. . . . Yea, my hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spread out the heavens. . . . I am Jehovah, that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth." [19] It was not the novelty of the idea that led the great prophet of the exile to revert so frequently to it, but the practical religious value that it had for him. The Jews were at the time without any organized government, scattered throughout the world, and surrounded by an imposing heathen civilization that seemed to give the lie to their most cherished faith. Hope

[19] 40. 12, 26; 42. 5; 45. 12; 44. 24; 48. 13.

had to a large extent died out. There was no immediate prospect of relief. What they consequently needed above everything else was comfort. And this Deutero-Isaiah found in the great thought that the covenant-God of Israel was none other than the creator of heaven and earth. "The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength." [20]

Shortly after the time of Deutero-Isaiah appeared the Priestly Code with its noble account of creation.[21] We need not here dwell upon its exalted spiritual conception of God nor its lofty view of human nature. These facts are familiar to the reader. The only point we need here direct attention to is the growing interest that the narrative seems to reveal in the divine creatorship. People have now begun to reflect on it, to draw out its monotheistic implications, and to find in it a doctrine that ministers alike to their comfort and spiritual edification. It is only natural, then, that the thought of the creative activity of God should figure more prominently in the literature after this time (about B. C. 500) than heretofore. We find it in some of the most beautiful of the psalms.

> "The heavens declare the glory of God;
> And the firmament showeth his handiwork." [22]

The heavens are the work of his fingers, and the sun and the moon and the stars he has ordained.[23] "He com-

[20] Isa. 40. 28, 29.
[21] Gen. 1. 1 to 2. 4a.
[22] 19. 1.
[23] 8. 3.

manded, and they were created." [24] "He spake, and it was done." [25] It is thou, O Yahweh, "Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain; who laid the foundations of the earth." [26] In Proverbs also the idea is impressively expressed.[27] And the book of Job is pervaded with it. Here not only are the heavens and the earth represented as the work of Yahweh, but they are declared to be simply the outskirts of his ways, a mere whisper when compared with the mighty thunder of his power.[28]

The creatorship of Yahweh, it is thus clear, was a well-established belief in Israel from the time of Deutero-Isaiah on. But the belief did not originate with him. "Have ye not known?" he asks, "have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? *It is* he that sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." [29] That Yahweh was creator of heaven and earth was evidently a truth that Deutero-Isaiah looked upon as having been handed down from the distant past. But how far back can it be traced? When did it originate? On this point there is wide difference of opinion. Some contend that it originated only shortly before the time of Deutero-Isaiah; others carry it back to the early preprophetic period.

In favor of the former date three different lines of argument are adduced. One is based on general considerations relative to the development of religious thought in Israel. Stade, for instance, says that a people, such as

[24] 148. 5.
[25] 33. 9.
[26] 104. 2, 5.
[27] 8. 22-31.
[28] 26. 14.
[29] Isa. 40. 21f.

preprophetic Israel, whose outlook hardly extended beyond the limits of Canaan, could not in the nature of the case have raised cosmological problems, and that the idea of Yahweh's creative activity could not, consequently, have originated until about the seventh century B. C.[30] But this argument is really a glaring instance of what has been called the psychological fallacy. Stade seems to think that the preprophetic Israelite with his limited knowledge of the world was as conscious of that limitation as we to-day are, and that, therefore, the idea of the world as a whole lay beyond his grasp. But the fact, of course, is that the world of the early Hebrew was as complete to him as our world is to us to-day, and hence the question of its origin may quite as well have presented itself to his mind as to ours. This is evident also from the history of thought among other early peoples. "Creation stories abound everywhere among people in a primitive state of culture." [31] "There is no people of antiquity now known to us which does not possess a creation story of some kind." [32] These facts, it is clear, make it not only possible but in the highest degree probable that the idea of Yahweh's creative activity originated early and not late in Israel's history. Indeed, creation stories may have been known to the Hebrews even before the time of Moses.

A second argument urged in favor of the late origin of the creation-idea is the paucity, if not complete absence, of references to it in the early literature. The preexilic prophets, it is said, make no mention of it, nor is there any reference to it in any early passage, unless we ac-

[30] *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments*, p. 239.
[31] Morris Jastrow, *Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions*, p. 65.
[32] R. W. Rogers, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 100.

cept, as most scholars do, the reading of 1 Kings 8. 12-13, found in the Septuagint. Cheyne thus renders this ancient fragment:

> The sun did Yahweh settle in heaven,
> But he said he would (himself) dwell in dark clouds.
> I have built a lofty house for thee,
> A settled place for thy habitation.

These words are ascribed to Solomon. They are represented as having been used by him at the dedication of the temple, and there is no good ground for rejecting the tradition. They clearly imply that Yahweh was regarded as the creator of the sun, and if so naturally as the creator of the heavens and earth also. But a single text such as this would, of course, not be regarded as adequate proof of the early existence of the creation-idea, if it was not supported by confirmatory evidence. In this connection we might refer to the statement in the Song of Deborah that the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.[33] This expression evidently implies that the heavenly bodies were under the control of Yahweh, and were probably his creation. A similar inference might also be drawn from the early poetic fragment, taken from the Book of Jashar, which represents Joshua as commanding the sun and moon to stand still.[34]

But more important than individual utterances such as these is the attitude of the early prophets. It is true that these prophets do not preach the creatorship of Yahweh as did Deutero-Isaiah. But it by no means follows that the idea was unknown to them. Their mission was simply different from that of Deutero-Isaiah. It was their task not to draw consolation from the thought of Yahweh's

[33] Judg. 5. 20.
[34] Josh. 10. 12-13.

creative activity, but to declare that Yahweh, the God of Israel, was also the moral governor of the world, and that as such he would punish all nations for their sins, especially Israel. Only incidentally then, if at all, would we expect to find in their utterances any reference to his creative activity. We have such a reference in Amos 4. 13, and, although it is now the fashion to ascribe this and the other two "nature passages" [35] to a later hand, it is quite possible that they all came from Amos. In any case, they certainly fit in with his exalted conception of God. And surely a prophet such as Isaiah, who represents the seraphim as saying that the whole earth is full of the glory of Yahweh,[36] must have believed in his creatorship. This idea in all probability formed the background of the teaching of all the earlier prophets. It stands in an especially close relation to their eschatology, the day of Yahweh to which they looked forward. This day, as we shall see in a later chapter, was to be a day marked by a marvelous manifestation of divine power. A new world-order was to be established, which would rival the glories of the golden age of the past. As Yahweh was to institute the new order, he must also have been regarded as the author of the old order. The world past as well as future must have owed its origin to him. What the prophets, it is true, chiefly reflected on was the moral, not the physical, order. But between these two orders they made no sharp distinction. In both Yahweh was for them "the everlasting creator of new things."

The third argument in favor of the view that the creation-idea did not originate until late in Israel's history is based on the assumption that the idea was borrowed from

[35] 5. 8-9; 9. 5-6.
[36] 6. 3.

the Babylonians and that the borrowing could not have taken place until after Israel had come into contact with the Assyrians toward the close of the eighth century. Now, it is quite possible that the Hebrew idea of creation was derived from the Babylonians, and it is unquestionably true that the biblical narrative of creation betrays Babylonian influence, but it is by no means certain, nor even probable, that this influence was first introduced into Israel after the eighth century. The priestly account of creation was probably put into its present form about B. C. 500, but the material embodied in it had almost certainly before that time had a long history in Israel. The antipathy to everything heathenish was so pronounced during the exile and, indeed, in prophetic circles from the eighth century down, that it is in the highest degree improbable that such a crude polytheistic myth as the Babylonian account of creation could during this period have been introduced into Israel and worked up into the biblical narrative. For the introduction of this myth into Israel we must go back to a much earlier date. Babylonian culture, as we know from the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, was diffused throughout southwest Asia before the settlement of the Hebrews in Palestine. The creation myths were current among the Canaanites. It was, then, only natural, indeed inevitable, that the Israelites should learn of these myths from the Canaanites among whom they settled. Yahweh was substituted for the Babylonian gods, and gradually the stories as a whole were transmuted into a form consonant with the higher faith of Israel. That the process of transformation was a long one is indicated by the marked contrast between the Babylonian and biblical narratives. It should also be noted that the J document[37]

[37] Gen. 2. 4b.

seems originally to have begun with an account of creation so similar to that in P that it was omitted by the editors of the Pentateuch; and, if so, the creation-idea must have existed in a developed form as early as the ninth century B. C.

Another consideration pointing in the same direction is the frequent allusions in the Old Testament to a dragon myth akin to that found in the Babylonian account of creation.[38] In the Bible Rahab[39] and Leviathan[40] take the place of the Babylonian Tiamat. The references to this myth appear chiefly in the exilic and postexilic literature, but they are so numerous and occur in a way that implies such familiarity with the myth that it cannot have been a recent importation. We conclude, consequently, that the idea of Yahweh's creatorship appeared early in the history of Israel. From virtually the outset Yahweh was to Israel all that Marduk was to the Babylonians. But only gradually did the full religious significance of the idea dawn upon the people. Not until the time of Deutero-Isaiah was it made the logical basis of universalism.

We now turn to the idea of the universal rule of Yahweh. This idea is clearly implied in the teaching of the eighth-century prophets. According to Amos, Yahweh had not only brought Israel out of Egypt, but had led the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir.[41] Nor was his power limited to earth. It reached high

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[38] See Morris Jastrow, *Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions*, pp. 107ff., and H. Gunkel's *Schöpfung und Chaos.*

[39] Job 26. 12-13; 9. 13; Isa. 51. 9; Psa. 89. 10; 87. 4; Isa. 30. 7.

[40] Psa. 74. 12-17; Isa. 27. 1; Job 41. 1-8; Psa. 104. 26.

[41] Amos 9. 7.

as heaven and deep as Sheol.[42] Isaiah speaks of Assyria as the rod of Yahweh's anger and the staff of his indignation.[43] Yahweh was using Assyria to accomplish his purpose in the world, and when this purpose was accomplished Assyria itself would be overthrown. "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations."[44] We have here the distinct idea of a world-purpose. There is a world-goal to be attained, and Yahweh is directing the course of events toward that end. In the accomplishment of this end Israel has a unique mission. She is the chosen of Yahweh. But what this mission implied, so far as other nations were concerned, apparently did not form a subject of special reflection with the eighth-century prophets. In one notable passage,[45] whose authenticity, however, has been questioned, Isaiah represents Israel as the future religious center of the world. But not until we come to Deutero-Isaiah is the idea of Israel's world-mission made prominent. Here Israel is represented as "a light to the Gentiles."[46] Through her Yahweh's salvation is to be brought unto the end of the earth. But however late this thought may have been in developing, and whatever the attitude of the eighth-century prophets may have been toward it, there can be no doubt that from their time on the idea of the universal rule of Yahweh was well established in Israel. They made it unmistakably clear that Yahweh, God of Israel, was the moral ruler of the entire world.

But when did the idea of Yahweh's world-power and world-purpose originate? Were these ideas altogether

[42] 9. 2.
[43] Isa. 10. 5.
[44] 14. 26.
[45] 2. 2-4.
[46] 49. 6.

new with Amos and Isaiah? The prophets themselves apparently did not so regard them. They laid, it is true, new stress on the moral character of Yahweh and represented his purpose as more distinctly ethical than had heretofore been done; but, so far as the general conception of his will and power is concerned, they added nothing new. The idea of the creatorship of Yahweh was already, as we have seen, current among the people; and so also was that of the day of Yahweh, an impending event of world-wide significance, which was to mark the end of the present order. "This eschatology, even in its crudest form, stood for the truth that the world was one and was governed by one purpose." [47] No doubt this purpose was inadequately conceived, and no doubt the current conception of the world of nations was a very imperfect one. But the framework of the idea was at least there; and to Yahweh's power there was thought to be no limit.

In a few passages dating from the preprophetic period[48] a world mission seems to be ascribed to Israel. In Abraham and his seed, we read, all the nations of the earth are to be blessed. This has been supposed to mean that the blessings of the true religion were to be mediated to the world through Abraham and his descendants. But the Hebrew word here rendered as a passive should probably be treated as a reflexive. The meaning, then, is that Israel was to be so prosperous that the nations of the earth would bless themselves by her, that is, would express the wish that they might be as prosperous as she. An exceptional destiny is thus ascribed to Israel among the nations of the world, but nothing is said about a

[47] A. C. Welch, *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom*, p. 71.

[48] Gen. 12. 3; 28. 14, J; see also 18. 18; 26. 4.

world-mission. This idea seems to have been later in developing. And so also the world and Yahweh's world-rule were no doubt conceived far more distinctly by the eighth-century prophets than in earlier times. But this does not mean that these ideas did not originate until the eighth century. They are assumed in the prophetic teaching as already known, and hence must have had their origin in the preprophetic period.

Our conclusion thus is that the lofty ideas of Yahweh's power expressed by the thought of his creatorship and universal rule arose early in the history of Israel. Their full import did not come to be appreciated until later. But when they did become the subject of special reflection and emphasis, there was no consciousness of any break with the past. Men felt that they were simply bringing out into clearness of expression truths that had been part of the common heritage from the beginning. To describe Yahweh as at first a war-god, then an agricultural land-god, and finally the world-god is to misrepresent the actual course of development. At no time was Yahweh's power limited to the battlefield or to the land of Canaan. From the outset Yahweh was both a *supernational* and a *supramundane* being, and it was only a specification of these transcendental elements in his nature when men later came to believe in his creatorship and universal rule. All that was needed to bring these beliefs out into distinct consciousness was the stimulus of an expanding experience. Both were present in germ in the Mosaic conception of God.

Along with the new stress placed on the creative activity and world-wide power of Yahweh from the time of the exile on there went naturally also an increased em-

phasis on his absolute attributes: his eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. Nowhere in the Old Testament is it stated or even hinted that Yahweh was not eternal. The Hebrews had no theogony. From everlasting to everlasting Yahweh was God. This was the belief from the beginning, but it received special emphasis in the postexilic period. Eternity was thought of as endless duration: Yahweh's years would have no end.[49] And yet there was a feeling that time did not have the same meaning for him as for us. A thousand years in his sight, we are told, are but as yesterday when it is past.[50] He is thus in reality a super-temporal Being. It is in the same concrete way also that his omnipotence is taught. The abstract idea is nowhere asserted, but the thought is expressed in a great variety of ways. God but speaks and the ordered universe springs into being. "He stretcheth out the north over empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." [51] The heavens are but the work of his fingers, and all the marvels of the stellar universe are but as a whisper when compared with the mighty thunder of his power.

The omniscience and omnipresence of God receive their clearest and fullest expression in Psa. 139. Here we read that there is no point in space so distant that God is not there, there is no darkness so dense that it can hide anyone from his presence, and there is no secret of the heart so profound that it can escape his all-seeing eye.

For there is not a word in my tongue
But, lo, O Jehovah, thou knowest it altogether.

[49] Psa. 102. 27.
[50] Psa. 90. 4.
[51] Job 26. 7.

Thou hast beset me behind and before,
And laid thy hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot attain unto it.
Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me,
And the light about me shall be night;
Even the darkness hideth not from thee,
But the night shineth as the day (vs. 4-12).

CHAPTER VI

THE HOLINESS OF GOD

HOLINESS, like spirituality, has both a natural or metaphysical and an ethical meaning. With us the ethical predominates. Indeed, holiness is about synonymous with ethical perfection. Borden P. Bowne thus analyzes the conception: "Negatively, holiness implies the absence of all tendencies to evil and of all delight in evil. Positively, it involves delight in and devotion to goodness. The knowledge of evil must exist in the divine thought, but perfect holiness implies that it finds no echo in the divine sensibility and no realization in the divine will. It further implies, positively, that in God the ideal of moral perfection is realized; and this ideal involves love as one of its chief factors." [1] But this was not the original conception of holiness, nor is it the conception that prevails throughout most of the Old Testament.

The root-idea of *kodesh,* the Hebrew word for "holiness," has been the subject of much discussion.[2] But no generally accepted conclusion has been reached, and by many the problem has been abandoned as hopeless. The view most commonly held is that *kodesh* meant originally "separation" or "cutting off." And this may very well have been the primary meaning of the term. A holy thing

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[1] *Theism,* p. 286.

[2] For a statement of the different views and a well-nigh exhaustive discussion of the subject, see Baudissin, *Studien zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte,* ii, pp. 5-142.

or person was one "separated" in one way or another from common use or from the common activities of life. But the original physical sense of the term nowhere occurs, and so is necessarily a matter of surmise. The word, wherever found, is used in a religious sense.

Holiness was primarily a characteristic of Deity. Its ascription to certain things and persons was secondary. Things and persons were not holy in and of themselves by virtue of their own nature. Whatever holiness they possessed was derived from their special relation to God or the gods. In its essential nature holiness was a unique quality of Deity. Indeed, it was not in the strict sense of the term a quality. It expressed rather the idea of divinity itself. The "Holy One" was a synonym for "God." [3] Even the plural *Kedoshim,* like the plural *Elohim,* was used in this sense.[4] In a Phœnician inscription we read of the "holy gods," and the same expression occurs also in the Old Testament.[5] "Holy" as here used does not denote a special attribute of the gods, but, rather, the differentiating nature of Deity itself. The gods were "holy" as distinguished from other beings.

It was chiefly by way of contrast with men that God or the gods were spoken of as holy. But the contrast also applied to the lower order of supernatural or spiritual beings. Angels, it is true, were regarded as "holy,"[6] but they were also called *Elohim* and *sons of Elohim.*[7] They were thought of as sharing in the divine nature and so as being holy as God is holy. Then, too, since the angels were messengers of God, dedicated to his service, they

[3] Isa. 40. 25.
[4] Prov. 30. 3.
[5] Dan. 4. 8, 9; 5. 11.
[6] Job 5. 1; Psa. 89. 5, 7; Zech. 14. 5; Dan. 8. 13.
[7] Psa. 8. 5; 97. 7; Job 1. 6; 2. 1; 38. 7.

may for this reason also have been designated as holy, just as sacred things and persons were. But supernatural or spiritual beings below the rank of Elohim, demons and spirits that stood in no direct relation to the Deity, were not regarded as holy. To them the idea of uncleanness was attached. And here it is that the distinction between "holy" and "unclean" had its origin. Things and persons dedicated to a deity were holy, while those possessed by a demon or spirit were unclean.

Before this distinction arose there was a lower state of development represented by the institution of *taboo*. "Taboo" is a term borrowed from the Polynesians, but the idea expressed by it is one common among savage and half-savage races. It rests on the belief that certain things and persons are inhabited by a mysterious demonic or divine agency and consequently are dangerous, so that they need to be approached warily or avoided altogether. They are not "holy" nor are they "unclean"; they exhibit characteristics of both classes. A sanctuary is taboo, and so is a dead body. The rise of the distinction between these two classes is due to the emergence of the belief in a higher order of spiritual beings, to whom a certain stability of character is attributed and who are looked upon as friendly. These higher beings, or deities, as they may be termed, are holy. They enjoy the respect of men, and true worship is paid to them. The lower spiritual beings, on the other hand, come now, by way of contrast, to be regarded as unclean. They and the objects dedicated to them are obnoxious to men and hateful to the gods. They must be avoided if contamination and injury are to be escaped. It is for this reason that no unclean thing could be made holy. Uncleanness meant possession by a demon or spirit, and this by its very nature excluded

that divine possession which formed the essence of holiness.

But while holiness was a unique characteristic of Deity, it nevertheless in its earliest form bore a certain resemblance to the magical and defiling influence attributed to the lower order of spirits and demons. Uncleanness and holiness had both grown out of the idea of taboo, and hence it was only natural that there should for a time be a certain affinity between them. The most noticeable point of resemblance is that both are represented as contagious. According to Lev. 11. 32ff., all things on which the carcasses of vermin might fall were rendered unclean and must be washed; and in the case of earthen vessels the uncleanness was thought of as penetrating so deeply that it could not be removed by mere washing. The vessels must consequently be broken, for any food or drink taken from them would pollute the one partaking. In a similar way it was held that the flesh of the sin-offering rendered everything it touched holy.[8] Any garment sprinkled with its blood must be washed, and the earthen vessel in which it was boiled must be broken. Holiness and uncleanness were thus manifestly viewed as a kind of physical infection, transmissible from one thing to another or from one person to another. So also, in the pagan rites described in Isa. 65. 5, a bystander is warned not to come near "or else I will sanctify thee" (emended reading), the idea being that anyone who entered the circle of the initiated would be infected with the holiness of the group. This conception of holiness clearly harks back to the primitive idea of taboo. The only advance it marks is the identification of the spiritual agency supposed to be resident in certain things and persons with a

[8] Lev. 6. 27ff.

deity instead of a mere spirit or demon. But this, after all, was a very important step forward. It put into the hearts of men respect for the gods instead of fear of an unknown or hostile power. And in this change we have, as Robertson Smith says, "a real advance beyond savagery. There is a great moral difference between precautions against the invasion of mysterious hostile powers and precautions founded on respect for the prerogative of a friendly god. The former belong to magical superstition, . . . [the latter] contain within them the germinant principles of social progress and moral order." [9]

From what has been said it follows that holiness as applied to things and places did not mean that these things and places had been withdrawn from private use and had become the property of the gods. Later some such idea seems to have become current. But originally the idea of holiness was independent of the property idea. It was, to begin with, older. Certain places were regarded as sacred before the institution of property in land had arisen. This was the case among the nomadic Arabians. In the next place, the holiness of a thing did not necessarily exclude it from human use, nor did it rule out human ownership. Sacrifices and tithes were holy, yet they were eaten by the priests and worshipers.[10] A sanctuary together with its entire equipment of images and other sacred objects might be owned by an individual.[11] Again, holy places were surrounded with restrictions which manifestly had no connection with their protection

[9] *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 154.

[10] Exod. 29. 33f.; Lev. 21. 22; 22. 10; Deut. 12. 26; Num. 18. 25-32; Deut. 26. 13.

[11] Judg. 17-18.

as property. Certain persons were denied access to the sanctuary, not because they were dangerous but because they were unclean and so offensive to the gods. Others found in the sanctuary an asylum. In the Old Testament this right of asylum was limited to those who were guilty of involuntary homicide,[12] but the older custom imposed no such limitation. All fugitives found shelter and protection at certain Arabian sanctuaries. The reason apparently was that blood-shedding or violence of any kind was regarded as an encroachment upon the divine holiness, and so could not be tolerated in the divine presence. The conclusion to which we thus come is that things and places were not holy because they were the exclusive property of the gods, but because they were in some way electrically charged, as it were, with the divine nature or substance so that it was dangerous for men to approach them except in certain specified ways. "Common things," as Robertson Smith says, "are such as men have license to use freely at their own good pleasure without fear of supernatural penalties, while holy things may be used only in prescribed ways and under definite restrictions, on pain of the anger of the gods." [13] To some things and places a higher degree of holiness, a "most holy" state, was attributed. This was because they were regarded as standing in an especially close relation to the deity and so were surrounded by special restrictions.[14]

It has been argued that holiness, even as applied to the Deity, expresses the idea of *relation*. "The Holy One of Israel," for instance, is interpreted as meaning that

[12] Exod. 21. 13-14.
[13] *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 150.
[14] Exod. 26. 33f.; Lev. 6. 25; 24. 9; Num. 4. 19; 18. 9.

God is holy by virtue of his relation to Israel. It is the relationship that makes him holy. But the fact that heathen deities generally were spoken of as holy excludes this view. "The Holy One of Israel" means simply that he who is holy has revealed himself in Israel or is God of Israel. "Of Israel," as Davidson remarks, forms no part of the idea of holy. Holiness is a common and essential characteristic of Deity. Indeed, J. P. Peters holds that it was not a characteristic of Deity in general, but the peculiar characteristic of each individual deity. "Holiness," he says, "was that which especially belonged to a god, his divinity, which not only differentiated the deity from man, but differentiated one deity from another. It is this peculiarity of each deity, his individuality, in which his holiness consists." [15] In support of this view it is pointed out that each deity had his own special rules of holiness, to which all were required to conform. But this fact hardly warrants the conclusion that the holiness of each deity differed in some essential way from that of every other. When it is said that "there is none holy as Jehovah," [16] the meaning is not that a peculiar form of holiness belonged to Yahweh, but that he alone was worthy to be regarded as truly divine. "Holiness" and "divinity" were almost synonymous terms. Amos, for instance, speaks of Yahweh at one time as swearing "by his holiness" [17] and at another time as swearing "by himself." [18] The two expressions evidently had substantially the same force. Holiness and the divine personality implied each other.

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[15] *The Religion of the Hebrews,* p. 295.
[16] 1 Sam. 2. 2.
[17] Amos 4. 2.
[18] 6. 8.

But while holiness was originally almost synonymous with divinity, it had a distinct connotation of its own. It directed attention to the unapproachableness of God, to that aspect of his nature which awakened in men the feeling of awe. God in so far as he called forth reverence and fear was holy. And this meaning of the term never left it. Whatever specific conceptions may later have been associated with it, it never lost the idea that God is unapproachable and a Being to be feared. In its earlier form there was something of the irrational in this conception of the divine nature. Men believed that they could not see God and live.[19] They also felt uncertain about the operation of the divine holiness. There was something mysterious and incalculable about it. A great slaughter was visited upon the men of Beth-Shemesh or, if we accept the reading of the Septuagint, the sons of Jeconiah, because they had in some apparently innocent way infringed upon the holiness of the ark.[20] And when Uzzah put forth his hand to stay the ark as it was about to fall, he was struck dead.[21] Yahweh was as yet a Being who was not fully understood, and so men asked in more or less of dismay, "Who is able to stand before Jehovah, this holy God?" [22]

Translated into psychological terms holiness in early thought took the form of wrath and jealousy. "Jealousy," as Cheyne says, "is the affectional manifestation of the divine holiness." [23] And the same might be said of the divine wrath, for jealousy is only a specialized

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[19] Exod. 33. 20, J; Judg. 13. 22; Isa. 6. 5.
[20] 1 Sam. 6. 19.
[21] 2 Sam. 6. 6f.
[22] 1 Sam. 6. 20.
[23] *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, p. 63.

form of the divine anger. Whenever the divine holiness was offended, whether by heathen nations, by the Israelites, or by any profane person or thing, the inevitable psychological reaction was wrath. This was naturally suggested by human analogy. As conceived in the Old Testament the divine wrath was akin to human passion. It was not always thought of as controlled by justice. Left to itself, it might overleap the bounds of equity.[24] Jealousy was awakened in the divine mind whenever the intimate relation between Yahweh and Israel was encroached upon. Israel might of her own free accord worship other gods, or her enemies might lead her astray and dishonor her. In either case the divine holiness was violated, and the divine jealousy aroused, against Israel in the one case,[25] and her enemies in the other.[26] These reactions of the divine mind in the form of wrath and jealousy were conceived of as taking place on the natural plane. They were expressions of the divine nature rather than the divine will or character, and so illustrate the nonethical view of holiness current in primitive times.

The primitive conception of holiness as a mysterious, indefinable, fear-inspiring characteristic of Deity formed the common Semitic background of Old Testament teaching. It appears, as we have seen, to some extent in the Old Testament itself; but it has interest and value there only as revealing the crude beginnings from which the distinctive Old Testament doctrine developed. "Israel," as Cornill says, "resembled in spiritual matters the fabulous King Midas who turned everything he touched into

[24] Psa. 6. 1; Jer. 10. 24.
[25] Exod. 20. 5; 34. 14.
[26] Zech. 1. 14; 8. 2; Joel 2. 18.

gold." This is especially clear in the case of the idea of holiness. The heathen associations of the term were not altogether discarded, but they gradually gave way to higher spiritual and ethical conceptions. Of these conceptions three may be distinguished: power, purity, and righteousness. Each calls for separate discussion.

The power or majesty of God was not far removed from the fundamental idea expressed by holiness, that of unapproachableness. What rendered God unapproachable, what above all distinguished him from men, was his greatness. This was true of the gods generally long before the rise of monotheism, and was true of Yahweh from the beginning. It became natural, therefore, to associate the holiness of God with the thought of his transcendent greatness. This is the sense in which the term is most widely used. It appears clearly in the *trisagion* of the seraphim:[27] "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts." It is implied in many utterances in the Psalms:

> "Let them praise thy great and terrible name:
> Holy is he;" [28]
>
> "Holy and reverend is his name;" [29]
>
> "God reigneth over the nations:
> God sitteth upon his holy throne." [30]

It is the idea that underlies the use of the term in Deutero-Isaiah. Holiness is there associated with the omnipotence of Yahweh. It is as Lord of the stellar host and as redeemer of Israel that he is the Holy One.[31] He is "the

[27] Isa. 6. 3.
[28] 99. 3.
[29] 111. 9.
[30] 47. 8.
[31] Isa. 40. 25; 49. 7.

high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." [32] But it is especially in Ezekiel that this conception of holiness is made prominent. Here "great" and "holy" are used synonymously.[33] What constitutes a profanation of the holy name of Yahweh is a disbelief in his omnipotent power. It was in this way that the Israelites by their exile profaned his holy name. They caused the heathen to believe that their exile was due to the weakness of Yahweh.[34] And so the sanctification of his name, the exhibition of his holiness, consisted in the assertion of his power by the restoration of Israel. Such a display of might on his part would sanctify his name by compelling the heathen to recognize his true majesty.[35]

Closely connected with this conception of holiness is the idea of the divine glory. The two are brought together in Isaiah 6. 3: "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." The glory of Yahweh was the outward manifestation of his holiness. It is represented in at least two different ways in the Old Testament. Isaiah sees it in the power and might manifest in nature and history,[36] and many later passages in the Old Testament echo the same view.[37] Ezekiel, on the other hand, represents the divine glory as a physical phenomenon, a bright or fiery appearance, indicative of the divine presence,[38] and the same view appears also in P.[39]

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[32] Isa. 57. 15.

[33] 36. 21-23.

[34] 36. 20.

[35] 20. 41; 38. 16, 23, etc.

[36] 2. 10, 21; 3. 8.

[37] Deut. 5. 24; Hab. 2. 14; Isa. 66. 19; Psa. 8. 2; 19. 1; 57. 5, 11; 63. 2.

[38] 1. 28; 9. 3; 10. 4; 11. 23; 43. 2ff.; 44. 4.

[39] Exod. 16. 10; 24. 16-18; 29. 43; 40. 34, etc.

There is, however, this difference. In Ezekiel the divine glory appears only in prophetic vision, while in P it manifests itself to ordinary human sight.

The idea is frequently expressed in the Old Testament, especially in Ezekiel, that Yahweh's motive in the redemption of Israel was to sanctify his name. "I wrought," he says, "for my name's sake."[40] "I had regard for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations whither they went."[41] "I do not *this* for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name."[42] The prophet's thought here seems to be that Yahweh was actuated by the motive of self-defense. His honor was at stake, and must be protected. The nations saw in the exile of Israel an evidence of his weakness, and so rejected the idea of his universal sovereignty. Hence it was necessary for him to restore Israel and make such a display of his omnipotence that none could doubt it. In this representation of the divine conduct there seems to be a non-ethical element. Yahweh seems to be moved to action by impulses akin to those natural feelings of resentment and offended dignity that figure so prominently in human life. In these feelings there is often very little, if any, ethical content. They arise frequently from mere sensitiveness of nature. And yet back of them, no matter how foolish and irrational they may be, there is a profound ethical principle, that of respect for oneself. Self-respect lies at the very basis of the moral life. No one can lose his self-respect without losing both the respect *of* others and respect *for* others, and so becoming fundamentally immoral. This holds true of men generally, and

[40] Ezek. 20. 9, 14, 22.
[41] Ezek. 36. 21.
[42] Ezek. 36. 22.

what Ezekiel does is to apply the same principle to God. God must as God be true to his own nature, to his own position in the world, and so must demand reverence from men. His holiness, his transcendent greatness, requires it.

It is perhaps not a mere coincidence that the prophet who thus stresses Yahweh's regard for his own name was also the prophet of individualism. The two ideas are nowhere directly connected, but the same fundamental thought underlies them both. According to individualism, every individual man has certain rights which society and God himself must respect. No one may justly be damned for the sake of anyone else, not even for the glory of God. And so it is also, on the other hand, with God. God by virtue of the fact that he is God has certain rights which men and nations must respect. He must at times act out of regard for his own holy name. Duty requires it. It is this profound ethical truth that lies at the basis of Ezekiel's conception of the divine holiness, as majesty or irresistible power.

The conception of the divine holiness as purity appears to some extent in Ezekiel,[43] but is especially prominent in the Levitical legislation. Cleanness, as we have seen, was a condition of holiness. Only clean objects could become holy. Hence cleanness and holiness came to be used almost synonymously. Both formed an antithesis to uncleanness. Holiness in this sense as applied to the Deity expressed a sensitiveness on his part to everything impure. He reacted against it as we do against anything repellent to our taste. Originally objects and customs were rendered impure because of their connection with

[43] 43. 7-9.

heathen deities, with ancestor-worship, or with other forms of superstition.[44] Such objects and customs awakened the jealousy of Yahweh and hence were cast out from his presence as unclean. Later, uncleanness came to be attributed to a wider range of objects and acts. All sin came to be viewed as uncleanness,[45] and unæsthetic things generally came to be regarded in the same light. Priests, for instance, were prohibited from wearing anything woolen on the ground that it caused sweat.[46] There was something in the divine nature that reacted unfavorably upon everything impure and improper. It was holiness in this sense that formed the ruling principle in the rites and ceremonies of the Old Testament. When Yahweh said, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," [47] what he meant was that the people should hold themselves aloof from everything ceremonially unclean as he himself did. Holiness, thus understood, did not exclude the moral, but it stood more closely related to the æsthetic nature.

It is in the last mentioned fact that the ethical justification of Old Testament ceremonialism is to be found. "It is the very nature of religion," as A. V. G. Allen has said, "that it tends to cultivate good taste as well as a right heart and right living." [48] Men demand that in our relation to them we should not only observe the moral law, but also those rules of polite intercourse which reveal personal respect and consideration. And so, the ceremonialist says, it should be in our relation to God. Etiquette has its place in religion. It is an indication not only of good taste but of spiritual refinement. It shows a sensi-

[44] Lev. 19. 31.
[45] Lev. 18. 26-28.
[46] Ezek. 44. 18.
[47] Lev. 11. 44; 19. 2; 20. 26.
[48] *Freedom in the Church*, p. 195.

tiveness of feeling toward the divine such as could not be expressed by mere obedience to the moral law. Moral obedience is fundamental and absolutely essential, but ceremonialism has its place in the further culture of the soul. If it obscures, as it sometimes does, the moral requirements of religion, it is of course to be condemned. But in and of itself it simply aims by a reverent and thoughtful approach to God to give expression to the inviolable purity of his nature. It aims to refine the sense of the divine presence. Ceremonial holiness, consequently, as applied both to God and man had a rational place in Old Testament religion.

The ethical conception of holiness is especially prominent in Isaiah. That this formed no part of the original meaning of the term is evident from the fact that the degraded beings, prostitutes and sodomites, who sacrificed their purity at the sanctuaries, were called "holy" ones, or "saints."[49] Such a use of the term *kadesh* would have been impossible if a moral quality had been expressed by it. All that the word originally meant was that the thing or person to which it was applied was in some way related to the sanctuary. The word was itself morally neutral. But as the worship of Yahweh became more and more firmly established in Israel, the idea of holiness naturally took its color from the prevailing conception of his character. And as he came to be thought of more and more distinctly as a moral Being, holiness naturally came to be regarded as having an ethical content. It was with Isaiah that this ethical content of the term was first emphasized. We see it in his inaugural vision. The holiness there attributed to Yahweh awak-

[49] Deut. 23. 17.

ened within the prophet a consciousness, not only of creaturely infirmity, but also of moral unworthiness, an unworthiness that attached both to himself and the nation.[50] As compared with the Holy One he and the people among whom he dwelt were morally unclean. "Jehovah of hosts," he says in another connection, "is exalted in justice, and God the Holy One is sanctified in righteousness." [51] This particular verse, it is true, is assigned by many critics to a later hand, but the idea it expresses is one that underlies most of the Isaianic prophecies. It is Isaiah's general teaching that Israel's sin is rebellion against God and that the divine holiness has manifested itself and will continue to manifest itself in righteous judgments on his people. The essential element in holiness is thus righteousness. And this must have been the case generally with those prophets who stressed the moral character of Yahweh. Nor are we to suppose that the ethical conception of the divine holiness was lacking with such prophets as Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah, who laid special emphasis on the power and greatness of Yahweh. Holiness was, as we have seen, a unique characteristic of Deity. It denoted no particular attribute. But when some attribute such as power or purity or righteousness was especially emphasized, the idea of holiness came naturally to be closely associated with it. In this way every distinctive attribute of the Deity came to be regarded as an expression of the divine holiness, or as virtually identical with it.

In the development of the Old Testament idea of the divine holiness there was a tendency toward a more distinctly ethical and spiritual conception. But the develop-

[50] Isa. 6. 5.
[51] 5. 16.

ment was not a steady upward movement. The half-magical and ceremonial elements in the preprophetic conception of holiness[52] gave way in Isaiah to the ethical, and from his time on the moral factor remained a constituent element in the idea of holiness. But in Ezekiel and the Priestly Code, as we have seen, the less distinctly ethical conceptions of holiness as majesty and ceremonial purity came into the foreground, and down through the post-exilic period these conceptions seem to have become increasingly prominent. Holiness, while not excluding the ethical, came to be thought of more and more from the ceremonial point of view. It was probably for this reason that Jesus used the term so seldom. In only two instances does he apply it to God. In John 17. 11 he addresses God as "Holy Father," and in the Lord's Prayer he teaches us to pray that the divine name may be hallowed. In both cases, it should be noted, the idea of holiness is associated with that of Father, and derives its meaning from that association. It is the fatherly or ethical nature of God, not his mere transcendence or mystic purity, that is thought of as the object of reverence and trust. The principle of ceremonialism Jesus rejected outright,[53] and with it went the ceremonial conception of holiness. If, then, the idea of holiness was to be retained in Christian thought, it could be only by completely moralizing it and making it synonymous with ethical perfection. This process of moralization began even before the time of Isaiah, but it did not attain its completion until Christianity had so thoroughly spiritualized the conception of God that men came to see that he could henceforth be worshiped only in spirit and in truth.

[52] 1 Sam. 6. 20; 2 Sam. 6. 7; Exod. 22. 31, E.

[53] Mark 7. 14-23.

CHAPTER VII

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

A CENTURY or so ago it was a common belief that the distinctive features of Israel's religion were to be found in its ceremonial regulations. The poet Goethe, for instance, in an article published in 1773, contended that the ethical Decalogue in Exod. 20 could not have been the basis of the Mosaic covenant, because the principles it laid down were universally recognized as valid and contained nothing distinctively Israelitic. The ceremonial Decalogue, on the other hand, supposed to be found in Exod. 34. 10-26 and now commonly known as "the J Decalogue," he argued, would have furnished a fitting basis for such an exclusive covenant as was that of the Old Testament. It was, he consequently concluded, the ten commandments in Exod. 34, not those in Exod. 20, that were written "on the tables of stone" at Sinai.[1] This theory in a modified form has found wide acceptance in recent times. It is now a common view that there is a second Decalogue in Exod. 34 and that this Decalogue is considerably older than that in Exod. 20. But the basis for this view is quite different from that on which Goethe rested his theory. Goethe held that the ethical element in religion was common to mankind and that it was the ceremonial that was distinctive of Israel. To-day scholars are agreed that the chief point of similarity between

[1] See the author's article on "The So-called J Decalogue" in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1909, pp. 82ff.

the Old Testament and heathen religions is to be found in its rites and ceremonies, and that the new and significant element in the Old Testament is the ethical. But this element, it is contended by many critics, was a late achievement in Israel's history. Hence we must hold that the ritual Decalogue in Exod. 34 was older than the ethical Decalogue in Exod. 20. It was, however, the latter, and not the former, that expressed the true genius and distinctive character of Old Testament religion.

Applying this conclusion to the Old Testament conception of God, we see that the characteristic element in this conception was righteousness. In the Semitic polytheisms there was usually some one god such as the Babylonian Shamash whose special function it was to maintain law and right; in the Zoroastrian dualism Ahura Mazda represented perfect goodness; and in the philosophic monotheism of the Greeks there was a strong ethical element. But none of these systems was, as Kuenen puts it, "ethical to the very core." [2] They were not absolutely dominated by the idea of righteousness, as was Hebrew and Christian thought. It was the unique characteristic of Yahweh that he was identified with the moral principle of the universe and that this principle was looked upon as absolutely sovereign.

But such a conception was naturally not the work of a day. It was the outcome of a long development. To trace the stages in this development is one of the most interesting and difficult problems connected with Old Testament religion. Wellhausen, as we have already observed,[3] has asked why, for instance, Chemosh of Moab did not become the God of righteousness rather than

[2] *The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel*, p. 590.

[3] Page 79.

Yahweh of Israel, and has replied that a satisfactory answer cannot be given. A partial answer, as we have suggested, might be found in Israel's passionate devotion to Yahweh; but in the last analysis Wellhausen's statement is no doubt true. There is an element of mystery lying back of the spiritual development of any people, which the human mind will never be able to penetrate. That mystery, according to theistic and Christian thought, belongs to the inscrutable will of God. To his will must be referred the ultimate explanation of everything. And when it comes to movements of different degrees of spiritual value, Christian thought sees in those of a higher character the presence in a unique sense of the Divine Spirit. Such a marvelous spiritual movement as that in Israel it, consequently, refers to the self-revelation of God himself. But this still leaves open the question as to how and when this revelation was made. Was the righteousness of God first revealed to Amos or can it be traced back to Moses? Under what form did it first manifest itself, and what was the attitude of the preprophetic Israelites toward it? These are all questions on which there is wide difference of opinion.

It is generally agreed that with Amos we have a complete moralization of the idea of God. To seek Yahweh and to seek the good are with him synonymous expressions.[4] Yahweh is the moral ruler of the universe, and what he requires of men is simply obedience to the moral law. But was this teaching of Amos "something new and startling in Israel"? Was it "a bolt out of the open blue," or did it have its roots in the past? Can it be traced back into the preprophetic period, or even to

[4] 5. 6, 14.

the time of Moses? How, in a word, is the relation of Amos to the early religion of Israel to be construed?

In answering this question it will be well to begin with Moses. If the Decalogue came from Moses, the question would be virtually settled. But this is unfortunately one of the main points of dispute in connection with the question. One of the chief objections to the Mosaic origin of the Decalogue is the ethical conception of religion that underlies it. This objection as an argument is, of course, a begging of the question, since the major point at issue is just the question as to whether there was a distinctly ethical element in the Mosaic conception of Yahweh. If there was, the Decalogue might have come from Moses; if not, it must have come from a later date. In the present state of thought it is consequently evident that the Decalogue cannot be used either to support or oppose the view that the ethical factor in Old Testament religion had its origin in the teaching of Moses. Though it may justly be contended that in default of positive disproof there is an *a priori* probability that the unanimous biblical tradition ascribing the Decalogue to Moses had a trustworthy basis.

If Yahweh, as conceived by Moses, "was no more ethical than any other god," it devolves upon us to show at what subsequent period in Israel's history the unique ethical element in the later conception of Yahweh might more naturally have been introduced. But this cannot be done. Between the time of Moses and that of Amos there was no event and no personality significant enough to be regarded as the starting point of so far-reaching a change in the conception of the character of Yahweh. This is conceded by Budde,[5] who, while denying that the Mosaic Yahweh was in any distinctive sense an ethical

[5] *The Religion of Israel to the Exile*, pp. 21-38.

deity, still contends that the germ of the subsequent ethical development must be found in the work of Moses. "All attempts," he says, "to find the germ of the ethical development of the Yahweh religion in the material *content* of the conception of God as represented by Moses, have completely failed." The ethical germ does not lie in anything that Moses taught or revealed. It is to be found in the fact that Yahweh, who had previously been the God of the Kenites, became under Moses' leadership the God of Israel. He chose Israel as his people, and they accepted him as their God. There was thus established a voluntary relation between a people and its god, something new in the history of religion, and out of this voluntary relation grew the new ethical element in Israel's religion. "Israel's religion," as Budde says, "became ethical because it was a religion of choice and not nature, because it rested on a voluntary decision which established an ethical relation between the people and its God for all time."

In this ingenious theory there may be some truth. But several criticisms naturally suggest themselves. In the first place, it is by no means certain that Yahweh was the God of the Kenites before he became the God of Israel. It is quite probable that he was known to some at least of the Israelitic tribes, if not all of them, before the time of Moses. And in that case there was nothing in the new loyalty to him evoked by the deliverance from Egypt to suggest the distinction between a religion of "nature" and one of "choice." In the next place, it is doubtful if the distinction between a "natural" and a voluntary" relation to the Deity ever played such a role in the history of religion as is implied in Budde's theory. Ancient peoples generally looked upon their relation to the Deity as a per-

sonal one, and it is open to serious question if any important people ever regarded the god of their fathers as "by nature bound so closely to the descendants that he was compelled to take their part whatever their behavior to him." [6] When Babylon fell, the priests of Marduk did not hesitate to attribute its fall to the anger of their god, just as the fall of Jerusalem was ascribed by the prophets to the wrath of Yahweh. The same free relation of the Deity to his people was assumed in both cases. Then, again, it may be noted that while Yahweh's choice of Israel is frequently referred to in the Old Testament, it is nowhere opposed to a "natural" relationship. Indeed, the two ideas, that of a "natural" paternal relation to Israel and that of a choice of Israel, at times go hand in hand.[7] And so far as the people themselves were concerned, there was nothing in the conception of their election by Yahweh that implied that their relation to him was primarily ethical. The prophets found it quite as necessary to moralize the idea of Israel's election as they did the idea of a "natural" relation to Yahweh. Between these two conceptions no distinction of any significance was made in the Old Testament.

What was ethically significant in the work of Moses was not the establishment of a new voluntary relation between a people and its God, but the new and profound sense of gratitude and loyalty called forth by the marvelous deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. That deliverance they attributed to Yahweh, whether they had known him before or not, and to him they poured out their soul in passionate devotion. This devotion was in itself a profoundly ethical act. It involved such a sur-

[6] H. P. Smith, *The Religion of Israel*, p. 60.

[7] Hos. 11. 1-4.

render of the human to the divine will and such an outflow of joyful gratitude to God that the prophets centuries later looked back upon it as the ideal expression of the nation's religious life. Israel was then "holiness unto Jehovah, the first-fruits of his increase." [8] He found her "like grapes in the wilderness; . . . as the first-ripe in the fig-tree." [9] The ardor she then manifested was the kindness of her youth and the love of her espousals.[10] And when Hosea describes the ideal Israel of the future he says that "she shall make answer there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." [11] In that early day no mummery of sacrifice vitiated her worship.[12] Her devotion was a pure service of the heart.

Whether this new-born and intense loyalty to Yahweh was accompanied by any definite instruction concerning his moral character and moral commands, is a point on which we are left in uncertainty. It is quite possible, and even probable, that the Decalogue emanated from Moses. But whether it did or not, and whether there was any other moral instruction that came from him or not, there can hardly be a doubt that the initial passionate devotion of Israel to Yahweh contained an ideal element that made it the germ of the subsequent ethical development. The Yahweh, to whom the Hebrews surrendered themselves, may not to an outward observer have seemed very different from Chemosh of Moab, but the glowing loyalty that he evoked carried with it of necessity a tendency to idealize his character. There are in our subjective moral

[8] Jer. 2. 3.
[9] Hos. 9. 10.
[10] Jer. 2. 2.
[11] 2. 15.
[12] Amos 5. 25; Jer. 7. 22.

equipment two positive factors, the good will and a certain ideal of life. Both come to us as obligations, and both in the case of the Hebrews must have been so stimulated by the sense of loyalty and gratitude to Yahweh as to lead to an essentially new view of his character and of the service he required of men. This higher ideal element may not at first have manifested itself with perfect distinctness. But the impulse toward it was certainly there. It was implicit in the intense devotion and sustained enthusiasm of the people. The God under whose banner they had enlisted was no mere nature-god, no mere dispenser of the good things of life, but a stern God of conscience, a God to whom law and right were dear.[13] As much at least of the ethical as this must be attributed to the Mosaic conception of Yahweh.

Between the time of Moses and that of the literary prophets we have both decline and progress. The period corresponds closely to that in Christian history between the apostolic age and the Reformation. The Reformation was a reaffirmation of primitive Christianity, and yet it marked also an important step forward. The intervening centuries, dark and backward as they had been, had still not been altogether fruitless. They had prepared the way for such an advance as that of the Reformation. And so it was with the literary prophets. They reaffirmed what they believed to be the teaching of Moses, and yet their teaching was not a mere echo of that of the nation's founder. The intervening centuries in spite of all their lapses had witnessed a distinct religious development, and this development it was that alone made possible the work of the eighth-century prophets. The

[13] Exod. 18.

outstanding characteristic of this period of development was the assimilation of a vast amount of heathenism and the gradual recognition of the essential antithesis between this heathen importation and the faith inherited from Moses. In the course of such a process it was inevitable that diverse views concerning the character of Yahweh should receive expression. In the main he is represented as a God of righteousness. The statement of a later writer that "judgment belongs to God," [14] holds true of this earlier period. Two striking scenes illustrate it. One is Nathan's arraignment of David for his sin against Uriah the Hittite,[15] and the other is Elijah's denunciation of Ahab for the judicial murder of Naboth.[16] But the idea in less striking ways finds expression throughout the period as a whole.[17] The Book of the Covenant[18] is in large part a legal embodiment of it.

Nevertheless along with this conception of Yahweh as a righteous Deity there are other representations that seem to conflict with it. Yahweh falls at times into an apparently unintelligible or capricious anger,[19] he manifests a jealous attitude toward human ambition,[20] he allows himself to be moved by such a material gift as the smell of the sweet fragrance of a sacrifice,[21] he incites to evil action,[22] and he shows favoritism to the Israelites,

[14] Deut. 1. 17.

[15] 2 Sam. 12.

[16] 1 Kings 21.

[17] Judg. 1. 7; 1 Sam. 2. 25; 24. 12; 25. 39; 2 Sam. 16. 10-12; 17. 14; 1 Kings 2. 32; 2 Kings 9. 24-26.

[18] Exod. 20. 22 to 23. 19.

[19] 1 Sam. 6. 19; 2 Sam. 6. 6f.

[20] Gen. 3. 22; 11. 6f, J.

[21] Gen. 8. 21, J.

[22] 2 Sam. 24. 1; 1 Kings 12. 15; 22. 23; 1 Sam. 26. 19; Judg. 9. 22-24.

even helping them against other people when they themselves are in the wrong.[23] In such instances as these it is no doubt true that the biblical writers did not mean to impute moral imperfection to Yahweh. What they related of him seemed to them proper enough. It was their own uneducated moral sense, their own imperfect conception of the divine sovereignty, and the nationalistic limitations of their own views that led them to ascribe to Yahweh acts that seem to us unethical. But the very fact that such acts were ascribed to him is of course evidence that the current conception of his character had not as yet been so completely molded on the principle of righteousness that the latter was regarded as forming the one touchstone of divine action. Another forward step was needed before the idea of God was fully moralized.

This forward step was taken by Amos and the other eighth-century prophets. It was taken, however, by them almost unconsciously. They were unaware of any break with the past. They regarded themselves as simply calling the people back to "the old paths, where is the good way." [24] And yet as we study their utterances we discover in them an ethical thoroughness and loftiness that we do not find in the documents that have come down to us from an earlier period. Their idealism moves on a higher plane. They feel themselves standing face to face with a marvelous theophany. God is about to reveal himself as the righteous Judge of the world. He had been such before, but his dealings with men had not always been so clear that they could discern the principle by which he was guided. In the great day about to dawn this

[23] Gen. 12. 10-20, J; 20. 1-18, E.

[24] Jer. 6. 16.

unclearness is to disappear, and God is to stand before men as the one living embodiment of righteousness and judgment. All iniquity is to be overthrown, and a new kingdom founded on right and truth is to be established. In these ideas there was nothing wholly new; there was nothing to which the devout of an earlier day would not have said "Yea" and "Amen." [25] Yet they reveal a clearness of vision, a firmness of conviction, and an elevation of moral sentiment such as had not appeared before.

The prophetic stress on the righteousness of God manifested itself in several ways. For one thing, it took the form of a denunciation of the traditional worship of the Israelites. This worship was in two regards unworthy of a righteous God. First, some of the objects and rites associated with it were of a debasing and even immoral character. This was true of the images used and of the prostitution practiced at the high places.[26] In the next place, the rites and ceremonies that were in and of themselves unobjectionable, were observed in such a formal way that they had no spiritual value. Instead of expressing the spirit of true piety they were regarded as a substitute for it. Instead of leading to a life of righteousness they were regarded as dispensing with the need of such a life. So deep seated was this heresy that the early prophets were forced again and again to condemn it. "I hate," says Yahweh, "I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies." [27] "I desire

[25] This is a significant fact. "In striking contrast is the progress of thought in Greece, where the awakening of the ethical consciousness caused a rupture between the culture of the philosophers and the popular religion, and led to a final decay of the political and social life." See Dr. K. Kohler's *Jewish Theology*, p. 39.

[26] Amos 2. 7; Hos. 4. 13-14; 8. 4-6; 13. 2.

[27] Amos 5. 21.

goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than burnt-offerings." [28] "What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah: I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed-beasts . . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me. . . . Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary of bearing them." [29] "To what purpose cometh there to me frankincense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me." [30] Thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil, even the sacrifice of one's first-born, had no value in his sight.[31] Nor did he give any heed to the outstretched hands of prayer when unaccompanied by the proper spirit.[32] It was to him a sufficient ground for the people's condemnation that they, as he says, "draw nigh *unto me,* and with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me." [33] In and of themselves rites and ceremonies were worthless, and the formal traditional worship a sham and a delusion.

Along with this condemnation of ceremonialism went, in the next place, an equally emphatic insistence on righteousness as the one essential element in the true worship of Yahweh. Righteousness was conceived by the prophets as both objective and subjective, both social and individual. Some laid more stress on one aspect, and some

[28] Hos. 6. 6.
[29] Isa. 1. 11-14.
[30] Jer. 6. 20.
[31] Mic. 6. 6-7.
[32] Isa. 1. 15.
[33] Isa. 29. 13.

on another, but all agreed in their conception of the essential nature of righteousness. It meant social justice, it meant personal purity, it meant a clean heart as well as right conduct. Amos emphasizes social justice, and this is also prominent in Isaiah. "Let justice," says Amos, "roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." [34] "Seek justice," says Isaiah, "relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." [35] Hosea condemns moral evil in general, but dwells with special emphasis on personal purity.[36] Jeremiah stresses the subjective side of righteousness. "Break up," he says, "your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah, and take away the foreskins of your heart." [37] "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it." [38] This idea is also expressed by Ezekiel. "A new heart also," he represents Yahweh as saying, "will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." [39] The most comprehensive statement of the ethical teaching of the prophets is the well-known saying in Micah: "What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" [40]

The most striking exhibition, however, of the ethical

[34] 5. 24.
[35] 1. 17.
[36] 4. 13; 7. 4.
[37] 4. 3-4.
[38] 31. 33.
[39] Ezek. 36. 26; compare 11. 19.
[40] 6. 8.

idealism of the prophets is to be found, not in their denunciation of the traditional religious formalism, nor in their insistence on righteousness as the one worthful thing in the sight of God, but in their teaching concerning the day of Yahweh. In that day soon to dawn the evils of the present order are to cease. The eternal and ideal is to emerge in the order of time. Yahweh is to establish his own kingdom among men. It is primarily in Israel that the *parousia* is to take place. In a certain sense Yahweh had ruled over the Israelites in the past. They had been his people and he their God. He had given them laws, and sent them prophets. He had punished them time and again and in the most varied ways for their sins. He had sent them famine and pestilence and earthquake and war, but all to no avail. After each visitation he was forced to say, "Yet have ye not returned unto me."[41] And so the prophet Isaiah in describing a series of chastisements was compelled to add after each of them the conviction that "for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still."[42] A more complete and striking manifestation of his wrath against all wrongdoing was consequently necessary. And this was to come in the not distant future. A doom surpassing anything known in the past was to befall Israel. War, captivity, fire, earthquake, eclipse, famine, pestilence—all these were used as symbols of the impending catastrophe, but none expressed its full terrors. Yahweh himself was to arise and shake mightily the earth.[43] Before his presence nothing hostile would be able to stand. The Israel of history with its idolatry, its injustice, its immorality,

[41] Amos 4. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.
[42] 9. 12, 17, 21; 10. 4; 5. 25.
[43] Isa. 2. 21.

its uncleanness of heart, would be swept away by the breath of his anger. Only righteousness and loyalty of soul would have a place in the new Israel that was to supersede the Israel of the past.

But Yahweh's day of doom was not confined to Israel. It was to involve all peoples. One nation might for a while be used to punish another for its sins. Assyria, it is said, was the rod of Yahweh's anger and the staff of his indignation.[44] But this was only a temporary phase of the approaching doom. Eventually all nations were to come under the divine wrath. To some extent the indignation of God against the sins of the heathen had manifested itself in the past. It was, for instance, the wickedness of the pre-Israelitic inhabitants of Canaan that led to their expulsion from the land.[45] But thus far the righteous rule of Yahweh in dealing with the heathen had manifested itself only to a very limited degree. In the great assize of the near future it would be different. The nations will then be tested by the plummet line of righteousness. Their pride will be rebuked, their hostility to the divine plan defeated, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day. Confusing as the present course of events may be, iniquity will soon be so decisively and finally punished that none will be able to doubt the absolute reign of righteousness in the world.

The righteousness of God, however, did not in the Old Testament mean simply judgment. It did not mean the enforcement of abstract justice. The Hebrews made no such sharp distinction between the divine righteousness and the divine mercy as we sometimes find in Christian theology. Righteousness with them was coextensive with

[44] Isa. 10. 5.

[45] Deut. 9. 5; Gen. 15. 16.

the moral nature. It embraced kindness, benevolence, humanity. One could not be righteous without being kind and loving. This aspect of the divine righteousness is brought out prominently in Deutero-Isaiah. Here righteousness is about synonymous with salvation. Yahweh is spoken of as "a just God and a Saviour." [46] "My righteousness," says Yahweh, "is near, my salvation is gone forth." [47] "My salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." [48] This use of the word "righteousness" is commonly explained by saying that Yahweh stood in a covenant relation to Israel, and so was morally bound to be true to that relation and to save Israel. But in Isa. 42. 6, 21 the divine righteousness is represented as initiating the covenant-bond, and in Isa. 51. 5 it has to do with the salvation not of Israel but of all mankind. It thus manifestly had a broader meaning than that of mere fidelity to a covenant relation with Israel. It carried with it the idea of grace and mercy as one of its constituent elements. The righteousness of God itself impelled him to save men. Just as a father is morally obligated to do everything he can for his children, so is it with God in his relation to men.[49] The very fact that he is righteous carries with it the idea of his benevolence, so that the triumph of righteousness means also the triumph of his grace and the redemption of all those that love his appearing.

There is another aspect of the divine righteousness that has created some difficulty for the modern mind. Right-

[46] Isa. 45. 21.
[47] Isa. 51. 5.
[48] Isa. 51. 6; compare 1 John 1. 9; Heb. 6. 10.
[49] Isa. 63. 16.

eousness as we apply it to a judge or ruler implies on his part an equal or impartial attitude toward all that come under his jurisdiction. But if God is righteous in this sense, how are we to account for his special relation to Israel, a relation assumed throughout practically the whole of the Old Testament? In the abstract such a relation can be justified only on ethical grounds, only on the assumption that Israel by its superior moral attainments had merited its election at the hands of Yahweh. But this assumption is manifestly one that lies beyond the possibility of proof. And so the tendency at present is to look upon the problem as insoluble and to refer it to that realm of mystery by which human life as a whole is surrounded. In a world of heredity and social solidarity abstract righteousness, in the sense of perfect equality in the treatment of all, is impossible of realization. This is true both of individuals and of nations. Why one should be apparently favored and the other not, we do not know. But in any case there is no greater mystery in the divine choice of Israel than in the unique history of Greece and Rome.

The Old Testament writers, in so far as they dealt with this problem, contented themselves with various reflections of an ethico-religious character. They assigned, for instance, the election of Israel and the blessings that came with it to the love of Yahweh without any attempt to give a reason for that love.[50] His love was with them an ultimate fact. At other times they attributed the favored position of Israel to the promises made by Yahweh to the patriarchs. The people were not deserving of the blessings they received, but Yahweh had promised the patriarchs that their descendants would receive these

[50] Hos. 11. 1.

blessings, and hence they were granted them.[51] We have here a suggestion of the doctrine of justification by faith. The patriarchs represented to the Old Testament writers ideal Israel. What they were, Israel in its best moments hoped to be. And what the Israelites thus hoped to be, or in other words, their faith, was thought of as the ground of Yahweh's gracious attitude toward them. A somewhat higher standpoint still is represented by Amos and Deutero-Isaiah. According to Amos, Israel's election did not mean a monopoly of the divine favor, but simply moral opportunity. Revelations of truth had been made to them such as had been made to no other people, but these revelations gave them no selfish advantage. They simply increased their responsibility and made the punishment of their sins all the more certain. According to Deutero-Isaiah, the special revelations made to Israel had an ulterior purpose. They were not granted for Israel's own sake, but for the sake of the whole world. Israel was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles.[52] It was in this that their election consisted. It was an election to a mission, an election to service. Why Israel rather than another nation was chosen for this mission is not stated. That was a question the prophets left to the mystery of the divine sovereignty. For them it was sufficient that the divine election of Israel, accepted by the people generally as a fact, should be moralized and spiritualized, and so be brought into essential harmony with the righteous character of Yahweh.

The moralization of the idea of God was Israel's supreme achievement. Its importance in human history can hardly be exaggerated. It saved religion from the

[51] Deut. 8. 18; 9. 5.

[52] Isa. 42. 1-4, 6; 49. 6.

groveling superstitions associated with signs and omens, superstitions that degraded both intellect and conscience. It likewise saved religion from the irrationality and emptiness of mere ceremonialism, a system of rites that stood in no vital relation either to the conscience of the individual or the social good. In a positive way it linked up religion with those elemental virtues that lie at the basis of every healthy social organism, and so made religion the mightiest agency in the world for both the preservation and development of society.[53] It furthermore tended to make conscience in a special sense the seat of religion, and so transformed religion from an external obedience to an inward fellowship between the soul and God, a fellowship that eventually rose above the world of time and sense and thus became the chief good of life.

[53] See the author's *Old Testament Problem,* pp. 39ff., and *The Beacon Lights of Prophecy,* pp. 82ff.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LOVE OF GOD

F. W. H. Myers, the English essayist and investigator of psychic phenomena, was once asked what one thing he would like to know above all others, what one question, if he were restricted to one, he would ask the Sphinx. After a moment's silence he replied that he thought it would be this: Is the universe friendly?[1] It is this question that lies at the basis of religion, and it is this question more than any other to which the Scriptures taken as a whole give a positive answer. God, we are told, is love.[2] But this exalted conception came only after a long period of development; and our task in the present chapter is to trace this development so far as it is reflected in the literature of the Old Testament.

Various terms are used in the Old Testament to express the idea of the divine love, or good will. There is, first, the Hebrew equivalent of the English word "love" (*aheb*), which is used both of human and divine love and of affection both pure and impure. Then there is the Hebrew word usually rendered "loving-kindness," or "goodness" (*chesed*). It is significant that the corresponding adjective (*chasid*) meant "pious," or "godly." This suggests that kindness was regarded as the distinguishing characteristic of piety. Closely associated with "loving-kindness" was the word "faithfulness" (*emeth*). These

[1] *The Problem of Religion,* by E. C. Wilm, p. 114.

[2] 1 John 4. 8, 16.

words occur together frequently.[3] They imply that God has the loyalty and good will of a friend. "Compassion" is another term used to express the divine love. In the Hebrew this term is derived from the word for "womb" (*rechem*), and so probably expressed the idea of mother-feeling.[4] Frequently coupled with "compassionate" is the word "gracious,"[5] a word used only to express an attribute of God. These terms all brought out the tender, affectional side of the divine nature, the side that manifests itself in the more intimate relations of personal life. The Hebrew word for "righteousness" (*tsedek*), by way of distinction, suggested, rather, a judge or ruler. It probably originally was connected with the idea of victory, victory in battle or in a court of law.[6] He was "righteous" who was adjudged such by appeal to arms or the decision of a judge. Only later did the term take on a broader and more distinctly ethical content. And even then its earlier judicial associations did not altogether disappear.

It is commonly agreed that Hosea sustained the same relation to the development of the doctrine of the divine love that Amos did to the development of the idea of the divine righteousness. And in both cases we have the same difference of opinion as to what this relation was. Some look upon Hosea's teaching concerning the divine love as "absolutely new." This is Cornill's view. "The entire faith and theology," he says, "of later Israel grew out of Hosea." It was with him that "those thoughts in which humanity has been educated and which have consoled it

[3] Gen. 24. 27, J; 2 Sam. 2. 6.
[4] 2 Sam. 24. 14.
[5] Exod. 34. 6, J; Psa. 103. 8..
[6] See B. Stade, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments*, p. 89.

for nearly three thousand years" had their origin, and hence "we must reckon him among the greatest religious geniuses which the world has ever produced."[7] The latter statement relative to the greatness of Hosea, while somewhat extreme, may be allowed to pass. He was without doubt a very remarkable man, and his teaching marks an epoch in the development of the doctrine of the divine love. But that his teaching on this point was "absolutely new" is a statement that will not bear the test of sober criticism.

Religion as distinguished from magic implies faith in the good will of the superintending spirit or deity; and this was especially true of the worship of Yahweh from the very beginning. What gave rise to the national religion of Israel was a mighty act of grace on the part of Yahweh. He delivered the Israelites in a marvelous way from threatened destruction, and thus revealed once for all his gracious disposition toward them. This disposition in early times manifested itself chiefly in the form of help against their enemies. It was through the aid of Yahweh that the Israelites triumphed over the Canaanites, the Midianites, and Philistines.[8] Indeed, all their victories were due to Yahweh's favor.[9] But it was not simply in time of war that Yahweh revealed his good will toward them. It manifested itself in the most varied relations of life both toward the nation and toward individuals.[10] At times he did things that seemed to belie his gracious character;[11] but these experiences while they

[7] *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 50.

[8] Judg. 5; 7. 14; 2 Sam. 5. 24.

[9] Deut. 9. 1-3.

[10] Gen. 24. 27; Num. 14. 19-20, J; Deut. 33. 3; 2 Sam. 2. 6; 24. 14.

[11] 1 Sam. 6. 20; 2 Sam. 6. 7.

perplexed the early Israelites did not destroy confidence in his essential goodness. In spite of apparently inconsistent acts on his part they continued to trust him as one kindly disposed toward them.

Several different figures are employed in the Old Testament to express the idea of the divine love. The most common one and the one that may be regarded as most fundamental is that of a covenant between Yahweh and Israel. The Hebrew word for "covenant" (*berith*) probably originally meant a "fetter" or "bond," and so came to be used in the sense of a compact between two parties,[12] or a decree imposed by one party upon another,[13] or a pledge made by one to another.[14] Of these different uses it is not certain which was the earliest. Where a *berith* was established between equals it would naturally take the form of a mutual agreement, involving mutual obligations and mutual rights. Where, on the other hand, a superior imposed his will on an inferior or pledged him his aid, the *berith* thus established would be in the nature of a law or a promise. In such cases a certain obligation either of obedience or grateful loyalty might rest upon the weaker party, but this was often overlooked, so that *berith* was frequently used as a synonym for commandment or promise. A promise might, of course, be made conditional upon obedience to a certain law, and in that case, if the arrangement were accepted by the weaker party, all three senses of *berith* would be combined in a single relationship. A "covenant" would be a compact, a law, and a pledge.

[12] Gen. 31. 44ff., JE; 1 Sam. 18. 3.
[13] 2 Sam. 5. 3.
[14] Jer. 34. 8ff.

It is in this threefold sense that the covenant between Yahweh and Israel was understood from the time of Deuteronomy down. Whether before that time the idea of a compact or mutual agreement between Yahweh and Israel was current, is a question on which opinion differs. The eighth-century prophets make no reference to such a compact. Hosea speaks twice of a "covenant," which Israel has transgressed,[15] but in both cases the word need not mean anything more than a "commandment" of Yahweh. It does not, however, follow from the silence of the eighth-century prophets that the covenant-idea was unknown to them; for quite a number of the later prophets, such as Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jonah, Joel, and Zachariah 1-8, all of them post-Deuteronomic except Zephaniah, fail to make use of it. It may simply be that the prophetic mind ran in different channels. So far as the idea itself is concerned, the presuppositions of it are manifestly to be found in the teaching of the eighth-century prophets. They looked upon Israel as standing in a unique relation to Yahweh, a relation whose continuance was morally conditioned. That they do not seem to have spoken of this relation as a covenant, may have been more or less accidental. *Berith* in their day and before their time was used in the sense of a divine commandment.[16] It was also used of the divine promise made to Abraham. In Gen. 15. 18 (J) we read that "Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." This promise, or covenant, seems to have been unconditional, but that it implied certain obligations on the part of Israel was, of course, taken

[15] 6. 7; 8. 1.

[16] Deut. 33. 9; Josh. 7. 11, E; 1 Kings 19. 14.

for granted. In Exod. 24. 7, 8 (E) the laws in the preceding chapters (21-23) are represented as forming the basis of the covenent relation between Yahweh and Israel; and in Exod. 34. 10, 27f., the same view is taken of the so-called J Decalogue.

But while the special relation of Yahweh to Israel seems thus to have been thought of as a covenant or mutual compact even in preprophetic times, it was not until the seventh century that this conception or figure became prominent. In Deuteronomy, Ezekiel, and especially the Priestly Code it is a ruling idea, and it appears also in Jeremiah and Deutero-Isaiah. It is, however, conceived in two different ways. In Deuteronomy it is represented simply as a historical fact. God made three covenants with Israel, one with the patriarchs,[17] one at Horeb,[18] and one on the plains of Moab.[19] But in Jeremiah and Ezekiel a more abstract or ideal conception of the covenant appears. These prophets refer in several instances to the Mosaic covenant,[20] but along with it they speak of a future covenant, a "new covenant," [21] a "covenant of peace," [22] an "everlasting covenant." [23] The new covenant does not exclude the older one, but it is a covenant grounded in the essential and eternal purpose of God rather than in a historical transaction. This conception of the covenant appears also in Deutero-Isaiah,[24] and it likewise underlies the Priestly Code. P, if we

[17] Deut. 4. 31; 7. 12.
[18] 4. 13; 5. 2.
[19] 29. 1.
[20] Jer. 3. 16; 11. 2ff.; Ezek. 16. 8, 59; 20. 37.
[21] Jer. 31. 31.
[22] Ezek. 34. 25; 37. 26.
[23] Ezek. 16. 60; Jer. 32. 40, probably from a later hand.
[24] Isa. 55. 3; 65. 8.

omit the single reference to a Mosaic covenant in Lev. 26. 45, knows of but two historical covenants, one with Noah,[25] and the other with Abraham.[26] But these covenants were not, from P's point of view, simply historical compacts; they were, rather, revelations of a higher eternal covenant,[27] a covenant that could not be broken,[28] grounded in the unchanging purpose of God.[29]

Where the covenant between Yahweh and Israel is represented, as it is especially in Deuteronomy, as based on a definite body of laws, the suggestion might naturally arise that the covenant-idea was an expression of a legal relation rather than a relation of love. And it is true that stress is often laid on the duty of obeying the laws that formed the basis of the covenant with Yahweh.[30] But the fundamental thought that lay back of the covenant-idea was never that of legal obligation, but always that of the divine grace. Covenant and grace were almost synonymous terms. "Jehovah thy God," we read, "will keep with thee the covenant and the loving-kindness which he sware unto thy fathers." [31] The covenant with Abraham was a gracious promise that the land of Canaan would be given to his seed. [32] And when their possession of the land was threatened by the Syrians in the ninth century and still more seriously by other foes toward the close of the seventh century, the people naturally found

[25] Gen. 9.

[26] Gen. 17.

[27] Gen. 17. 7, 19.

[28] Lev. 26. 44.

[29] For a detailed discussion of the covenant-idea in the Old Testament see *Die Bundesvorstellung im Alten Testament,* by Richard Kraetzschmar.

[30] Deut. 26. 16-19.

[31] Deut. 7. 12; compare Isa. 54. 10.

[32] Gen. 15. 18, J.

comfort and assurance in the thought of the covenant with Yahweh. He was by virtue of his covenant with the fathers pledged to help them. This help did not come in the form expected; their land was lost. But they nevertheless continued to cling to the covenant-idea. They saw in it not only a guarantee of their return to Palestine, but an assurance of the eternal favor of God toward them as a people. Indeed, the covenant with its assurance of the divine grace was extended by P to men generally, at least in so far as they embraced the Judaic faith. It is this thought that underlies the account of the covenant with Noah.[33]

Another figure that plays an important role in the Old Testament is that of Yahweh as the husband of Israel or Israel as the wife of Yahweh. It was Hosea, so far as we know, who first gave ethical significance to this figure. The figure itself was not new with him. It had been current among heathen peoples. They thought of the deity as wedded to his people or to the land. It was this idea that underlay the immoral practices connected with the Canaanitic sanctuaries. But "slain and made carrion by the heathen religions, the figure was restored to life by Hosea." In its heathen form it had no doubt been long current in Israel, but there is no evidence that before his time it had been spiritualized and incorporated into the higher religious faith of the people. To have achieved this was the unique distinction of Hosea. He represented Israel as the wayward wife of Yahweh. By her idolatry, her immorality, her foreign intriguing, her social injustice, her violation of the moral law in general, she had been guilty of illicit relations with other gods.

[33] Gen. 9; compare Isa. 42. 6; 49. 8.

She had broken her troth with Yahweh, and hence was about to be driven from his house. But however deserved this punishment may have been, the love of Yahweh could not altogether desert her. "How," he cries, "shall I give thee up, Ephraim? *how* shall I cast thee off, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? *how* shall I set thee as Zeboiim? my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath." [34] The holy wrath of Yahweh was tempered and held in check by his love.

It is here that Hosea's most significant contribution to the doctrine of God is to be found. Amos had once for all established the truth that God is righteousness and that religion is law. What Hosea did "was to prove in God so great and new a mercy as was capable of matching that law." Religion, he taught us, was love as well as law, and love, he held, was stronger than law. Just as a man by a deep instinct of his nature seeks a wife and cleaves unto her, so was it with Yahweh in his relation to Israel. There was a deep ingrained bond of union between them. And that union had all the intensity, all the passion, all the delicacy, and all the refinement of feeling that manifests itself in the marriage relation in its highest and purest form. To have fixed upon this thought and to have given it abiding expression, was no small achievement; and this we owe to Hosea. Such a conception naturally made a profound impression upon the people of Israel. The later prophets employ it,[35] and under its influence it became the custom to speak of all idolatry as

[34] Hos. 11. 8-9.

[35] Jer. 2. 2; 3. 1; Ezek. 16; 23; Isa. 50. 1; 54. 5.

harlotry. Ezekiel, it may be added, combines the ideas of a covenant and a conjugal relation, regarding the two as essentially the same.[36]

Another figure used in the Old Testament to express the idea of the divine love is that of God as Father. Both "husband" and "father" expressed to the ancient Semite the idea of authority quite as much as that of love. But in Old Testament usage the latter predominates. There are eleven instances in the Old Testament where God is spoken of as Father, and in all except two[37] the term is used in a kindly affectionate sense.[38] This is also true of the cases where Yahweh is likened to a father,[39] and of the correlative expressions where Israel is spoken of as God's son[40] or the Israelites as his children.[41]

> "Like as a father pitieth his children,
> So Jehovah pitieth them that fear him." [42]

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. . . . I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; . . . I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." [43] "Thou, O Jehovah, art our Father; our Redeemer from everlasting is thy name.[44] It is commonly stated that the Fatherhood of God in the

[36] Ezek. 16. 8.
[37] Mal. 1. 6; 2. 10.
[38] Jer. 3. 4, 19; 31. 9; Isa. 63. 16; 64. 8; Deut. 32. 6; 2 Sam. 7. 14; Psa. 68. 5; 89. 27.
[39] Psa. 103. 13; Deut. 1. 31; 8. 5.
[40] Hos. 11. 1; Exod. 4. 22; Jer. 31. 20.
[41] Hos. 1. 10; Deut. 14. 1; Isa. 43. 6.
[42] Psa. 103. 13.
[43] Hos. 11. 1-4.
[44] Isa. 63. 16.

Old Testament applied only to the nation. It was not personal. The individual Israelite did not have the right to call himself Yahweh's son. But this is open to serious question. It is true that in most of the passages above cited it is the nation of which Yahweh is said to be the Father. But in two of them[45] it is the Messiah to whom he is represented as standing in a paternal relation; in several others[46] it is individual Israelites; and in still others[47] the latter are spoken of as sons of God. It is, therefore, surely possible and probable that the individual Israelite in Old Testament times thought of himself as a son of God and addressed Yahweh as his Father. This method of address to the Deity was current in idolatrous circles in Israel,[48] and in the postcanonical literature we occasionally find it. In Ecclesiasticus 23. 1, 4 we read: "O Lord, Father and Master of my life, . . . O Lord, Father and God of my life." Not until the Christian era, it is true, did this method of address become regular and normative. But in the Old Testament period it must to some extent have been current from the earliest times. For the presuppositions of its use were always there. There never was a time in the history of Israel when the individual did not regard himself as under the providential care of Yahweh.

The idea of the Fatherhood of God was not peculiar to Hebrew and Christian thought. It was a common heathen conception. But among the heathen the divine fatherhood was conceived in a physical sense. The clan or tribe traced its descent back to its god. In that sense

[45] *2* Sam. *7.* 14; Psa. 89. *27.*
[46] Psa. 68. 5; Isa. 63. 16; 64. 8.
[47] Hos. 1. 10; Deut. 14. 1; Isa. 43. 6.
[48] Jer. *2. 27.*

its members were sons and daughters of the deity.[49] "In Christianity," on the other hand, "and already in the spiritual religion of the Hebrews, the idea of divine Fatherhood is entirely dissociated from the physical basis of natural fatherhood. Man was created in the image of God, but he was not begotten; God's sonship is not a thing of nature, but a thing of grace. In the Old Testament, Israel is Yahweh's son, and Yahweh is his Father who created him; but this creation is not a physical act, it refers to the series of gracious deeds by which Israel was shaped into a nation." [50] The divine Fatherhood in the Old Testament was thus a spiritual relationship. The term was a figurative expression of the divine love and the divine creative activity. How early in Israel's history the term was used in this sense, we do not know. But there is no good reason why it should not have been thus used from the time of Moses down. And this is also true of other figures expressive of the divine care, such as those which represent God as a physician,[51] and as a shepherd.[52]

The difference between Hosea's teaching concerning the divine love and that of his predecessors was simply one of degree. The assurance of Yahweh's good will had formed the basis of Israel's religion from the beginning. At any time during the preprophetic period Yahweh's relation to Israel might have been represented as that of a covenant; he might also have been spoken of as Israel's father or husband or physician or shepherd. There is nothing in any of these figures that would have been

[49] Num. 21. 29, E; Mal. 2. 11.
[50] W. R. Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 41.
[51] Exod. 15. 26; Hos. 6. 1; 7. 1; 14. 5.
[52] Psa. 23; Ezek. 34.

inconsistent with the religious consciousness of early Israel. But as yet the nation's religious consciousness was more or less amorphous. It had not crystallized into definite form. It moved also to a large extent on a low material plane. What it needed was to be lifted to a higher ethical level. It needed to have the love of Yahweh exhibited in so striking a way, that men would see that it was the deepest attribute of the divine nature, an attribute that could be trusted in spite of all human waywardness and suffering, an attribute that made certain the ultimate solution of the problem of redemption. And this Hosea did for Hebrew thought. He set the grace of God on high as had not been done before. He took the tenderest and most intimate human relations and made them symbols, broken lights, of the divine affection. "There is," says George Adam Smith, "no truth uttered by later prophets about the divine grace, which we do not find in germ in him. . . . He is the first prophet of grace, Israel's first evangelist." [53]

But significant as was the teaching of Hosea, there was one important regard in which it was defective. The divine love that he preached was restricted to Israel. He had no message of grace for the heathen world. At least no utterance of his to that effect has come down to us. This does not mean that he regarded the rule of Yahweh as confined to Israel. He was a monotheist. He recognized no real Deity except Yahweh. But as yet the practical implications of monotheism had not been worked out. The divine purpose concerning the heathen world had not been made the subject of reflection. Amos had declared that the divine providence was uni-

[53] *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. i, p. 230.

versal. It embraced heathen peoples like the Philistines and Syrians as well as Israel.[54] And Isaiah a little later represented the peoples of the world as coming to Jerusalem for instruction and guidance.[55] But such visions and insights were wholly incidental to the work of the eighth-century prophets. The local problems of their day were too engrossing to permit much attention being paid to the heathen. The very existence of the Israelitic state was at stake, and so long as this remained the case, there was little opportunity or occasion to consider the relation of Yahweh to the world as a whole. And so it came to pass that universalism, which is logically the correlate of monotheism, did not become a distinct feature of Israelitic thought until considerably later.

We find in Jeremiah[56] and Ezekiel[57] occasional glimpses of a redeemed heathenism, but it is not until we come to Deutero-Isaiah that the gracious purpose of Yahweh to the world as a whole is made a cardinal theme of prophetic preaching. "A law," we here read, "shall go forth from me, and I will establish my justice for a light of the peoples. My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the peoples; the isles shall wait for me, and on mine arm shall they trust. . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. By myself have I sworn, the word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall

[54] Amos 9. 7.
[55] Isa. 2. 2-4.
[56] 16. 19-20.
[57] 16. 53-63.

swear." [58] The supreme task of the Servant, ideal Israel, is that of being a light to the Gentiles.[59] The whole plan of God has as its goal the redemption of all mankind. This idea also finds expression in some of the Psalms[60] and later prophecies.[61] But it is in the book of Jonah that the divine love for the heathen receives its most persuasive and affecting expression. Here Israel is rebuked for its narrow and unsympathetic attitude toward the heathen. Jonah, who represents Israel, became angry when the divine mercy was extended to the people of Nineveh. How unnatural and unhuman this was, is illustrated by the prophet's attitude toward the gourd. A wild, ephemeral plant had suddenly sprung up. Jonah had expended no labor upon it, he had not made it grow, and yet when it suddenly perished he was full of pity for it. "And should not I," asks Yahweh, "have regard for Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" [62] The love of God for the heathen is here grounded in the natural instinct of pity for the needy, and especially in the feeling of interest and sympathy that grows out of the sense of creatorship. We love that which we create.[63] God has created all things, and consequently his love embraces all mankind; indeed, it extends even to the animal world. "Thou lackest much," says the author of 2 Esdras,[64] "before thou canst love my creature more than I."

[58] Isa. 51. 4, 5; 45. 22, 23.
[59] 49. 6.
[60] 22. 27; 65. 5.
[61] Isa. 19. 23-25.
[62] 4. 11.
[63] Compare Jer. 45. 4.
[64] 2 Esdras 8. 47.

This generous attitude toward the heathen was shared by only a limited number in postexilic Judaism. But it represented the line along which the growing revelation of God was certain to develop. The one Creator of the world and God of righteousness must needs eventually manifest to all men the same love that he had shown to Israel. National prejudice might for a while resist this natural and logical development of religious thought, but the barrier thus created could not be permanent. Ultimately some movement would certainly arise, which would break through the artificial restrictions created by post-exilic priests and scribes and make the God of the prophets in very truth the God of all nations; so that in his kingdom there would be "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free."

In Christianity this goal was realized; and in the process of expansion the love of God lost none of its depth or intensity. Rather did it grow, and grow to a surprising degree, in power and richness of content. The distinctive element in it, as it was conceived by Christianity, has been put in such an impressive and admirable way by Professor Bowne that I quote from him at some length: "In the exercise of his love God has sent us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons and daily bread. But this was not enough. He also sent us prophets and teachers to reveal his will. But this also was not enough. There was a still higher thought, and Christianity dared to think it. It was that God himself should come into humanity for his supreme self-manifestation and for the redemption of men, And when the way had been prepared, the Divine Son appears as the Divine Redeemer. There is nothing beyond this. The possibilities of grace are

exhausted. God has made the highest moral revelation of himself. He is seen at the head of all those who love, and for love's sake bear burdens and sacrifice themselves. A Divine Person working for love's sake a divine work for man's redemption is the center of the Christian faith and the source of its power. Drop it out of our teaching, and, though the external form and facts remain unchanged, the life is gone nevertheless. Men wonder that Christian faith should cling so pertinaciously to this mysterious doctrine—mysterious to speculation, but clear to love—but the reason is that it contains all that is distinctively Christian. The self-sacrificing love of God, and even the ethical perfection and moral grandeur of God, are all bound up in this doctrine. That which stirs men's hearts has always been the condescension, the grace of the Lord Jesus, the cross, that is, the self-renunciation, of Christ. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 'He loved us and gave himself for us.' Now the revelation of love and righteousness is complete. And now not merely gratitude, but adoring love and absolute self-surrender, become possible on our part. Now intellect and conscience and heart and will alike can come to God and say: 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.' No wonder that Paul cried out, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' No wonder that Peter declares that the angels desire to look into this grace of God. For surely in earth or heaven there is nothing great or divine besides." [65]

This concludes our study of the doctrine of God. We have seen that the God of the Hebrews was from the be-

[65] *Studies in Christianity*, p. 102-104.

ginning a distinctly personal Being. He stood in a free and independent relation to the world. His personality did not blend with nature nor lose itself in a pantheistic haze. It retained throughout its unity and distinctness. Ideas relative to the divine nature and power were naturally at first vague and unsettled. Yahweh was not thought of as God of all the world, and yet he was not regarded as bound to any particular place, nor as necessarily limited in the exercise of his power. He was equal to all the demands made upon him, and as these demands increased, the range of his being and power increased with them. At an early date he came to be thought of as Creator of the world. Stress was not laid on this idea, nor was it interpreted as excluding the existence of other gods, until the Israelites in exile were brought face to face with a formidable and threatening heathenism; but the idea itself was preprophetic, if not Mosaic. In a similar way the universal rule of Yahweh did not come to definiteness of expression until the idea of the world and the world-empire "was beaten into the trembling hearts of the prophets by the pitiless hammer-strokes of fate;" [66] but the general conception of his unlimited power was older. From the outset he was for all practical purposes omnipotent. Other deities existed, but they interposed no barrier to the execution of his will; and, as the life of the people developed and their thought expanded, he took under his control more and more of the Elohim-world, until finally no place was left for other gods, and they came to be regarded as virtually nonexistent.

Along with the gradual expansion of the power and being of Yahweh went also a gradual moralization of

[66] Kittel, *History of the Hebrews*, vol. i, p. 242.

his character. He was always looked upon as "spiritual" and "holy," but at first no ethical quality attached to these terms. They simply expressed the supernatural and mysterious character of divinity, and were applied to other gods as well. Indeed, to an outward observer Yahweh may not at the outset have seemed to differ in any important regard from the gods of the neighboring peoples. Yet even then there was something about him that evoked from his people an intense and sustained devotion such as we nowhere else find. And this devotion had in it the germ of the whole subsequent religious development in Israel. It led men to idealize the character of Yahweh. It led them to think of him as essentially a God of righteousness and love. Thus endowed, he stood heaven-high above all other gods. He was "spiritual" and "holy" in an altogether unique sense. He needed and would tolerate no images in his worship. He had no interest in sacrifices, and cared not for rites and ceremonies. All that he asked of men was that they should do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before him.

It was this ethical quality that by the eighth century B. C. constituted the unique characteristic of Yahweh. It was this that differentiated him from other deities, and gave to him his distinctive value. What made it worth while believing in him was his righteousness and his love. It was these qualities that made him God in the full sense of the term. And so the conclusion was drawn that other gods, who lacked these qualities, were not really gods. True divinity is indistinguishable from moral perfection. Yahweh, therefore, who alone is morally perfect, is the only God. Thus the logic of conscience joined hands with the soul's need of an all-sufficient helper, and ethical monotheism was the result.

CHAPTER IX

ANGELS AND OTHER DIVINE BEINGS

Divinity with the Hebrews was practically synonymous with Yahweh, and yet the two ideas were not altogether conterminous. In the earlier period of their history the Israelites did not deny the existence of other gods, and after they had begun to assert the sole deity of Yahweh they still believed that there were other supernatural beings who like Yahweh were invisible and spiritual, and in this sense divine. To this group belong especially the angels. They were subordinate to Yahweh, but partook of his nature and served a distinct purpose in the divine economy.

In the strict sense of the term W. H. Bennett is probably right in defining an angel as "a subordinate superhuman being in monotheistic religions," and consequently in holding that "in the earlier periods of the religion of Israel . . . the idea of angel in the modern sense does not occur." [1] But the distinction between a subordinate superhuman being in a monotheistic and in a monolatrous system is at the most slight, and may in our discussion be disregarded. There is, furthermore, no date or even period which can be fixed upon with certainty as marking the transition from monolatry to monotheism. The development was a very gradual one and was brought about almost unconsciously. We may, therefore, use the term

[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica,* vol. ii, 4f.

"angel" freely to designate a subordinate supernatural being referred to during any period of Israel's history.

The common Hebrew word for "angel," *malak,* means "messenger," and in this sense is used of men[2] as well as angels. The angels are also spoken of as *"ministers."*[3] They are designated *"sons of Elohim"*[4] and "sons of Elim."[5] They are described as "holy ones"[6] and watchers,"[7] and are referred to as the "host" or "hosts" of heaven, of God, of Yahweh.[8] The term "host" was also applied to the stars.[9] Between the stars and angels there was supposed to be a close connection.[10] Whether the angels were spoken of as *Elohim,* "gods," as well as *sons of Elohim* is a question. In Psa. 8. 5. *Elohim* is commonly rendered "angels,"[11] and it is quite possible that the term was used in this sense; for in several instances it has the general meaning of "a godlike being,"[12] and an angel may very well have been so designated. But in this particular passage *Elohim* probably means neither "angels" nor "God" exclusively, but both. It is divine beings generally, than whom man has been made but a little lower.

These different terms applied to angelic beings may be divided into two groups, those that define the nature of angels and those that describe their office or function. To

[2] Gen. 32. 3, J; Num. 21. 21, E; Hag. 1. 13; Mal. 2, 7.
[3] Psa. 103. 21.
[4] Gen. 6. 2, 4, J; Job. 1. 6; 2. 1.
[5] Psa. 29. 1; 89. 6.
[6] Psa. 89. 5, 7; Job 5. 1; Zech. 14. 5.
[7] Dan. 4. 13, 17.
[8] 1 Kings 22. 19; Psa. 103. 21; 148. 2; Isa. 24. 21; Dan. 8. 10.
[9] Deut. 4. 19; Isa. 34. 4; 40. 26; Jer. 33. 22.
[10] Job 38. 7.
[11] Heb. 2. 7.
[12] 1 Sam. 28. 13; Exod. 4. 16; 7. 1.

the first group belong the terms "sons of God" and "holy ones." "Sons of God" is not to be understood in a physical or genealogical sense. Like the analogous expression "sons of the prophets," it denotes membership in a guild, in this case the divine guild. The "sons of God," or "sons of the gods," were divine beings conceived as forming a class or fraternity. They partook of the divine nature, were spirits, belonged to the *Elohim* world. It was in this sense probably also that angels were spoken of as "the holy ones." Holiness, as we have seen, was a unique characteristic of Deity, and in it the angels as divine beings shared. Indeed, "holy" as applied to them was hardly more than a synonym for "divine." It may be that they were also thought of as "holy" in the later and derived sense of the term, that is, as dedicated to the service of God. They were ministers of Yahweh, and hence, like the priests of the temple, may naturally from this point of view have been regarded as holy. In later times especially, when the distinction between the Deity and all subordinate forms of being became more and more pronounced, this usage must almost inevitably have arisen.

The function of the angels is expressed by the terms "messengers," "ministers," and "watchers," and is also implied in their being spoken of as the "host" of heaven. They are the army of God; they carry out his will, obey his commands. They represent and mediate the Divine Providence. They make known the divine will. In all the multitudinous forms of the divine activity they manifest themselves as the efficient agents of the Most High. They have no independent purposes or functions of their own. Their activity is merged in that of God. In this complete subordination of angelic beings to the Deity we

no doubt have a relatively late development. In earlier times there were "sons of God" who were looked upon as acting contrary to the divine will. The one distinct illustration of this in the Old Testament is found in Gen. 6. 1-4, a passage that has been correctly described as a piece of "unassimilated mythology." The "sons of God" are here represented as conducting themselves in perhaps a sensual, certainly a high-handed manner toward God's lower creatures. When they "saw the daughters of men that they were fair, . . . they took them wives of all that they chose." This representation of the sons of *Elohim* is so different from that of the *malakim,* or angels, that it is evident that the two conceptions must originally have been independent. Indeed, it is nowhere in the Old Testament distinctly stated that the sons of *Elohim* were the same as the *malakim.* The two conceptions gradually merged into unity, but the unity is not directly affirmed.

As to the origin of the belief in angels there is considerable difference of opinion. Kosters[13] argued at length that the "sons of God" were the gods of the heathen degraded into ministering servants of the one God Yahweh. For this view there is some support in Scripture. In Psa. 89. 6 we, for instance, read, "Who among the sons of the mighty is like unto Jehovah?" and in Psa. 86. 8, "There is none like unto thee among the gods, O Lord." The original has, instead of "the mighty," *Elim* (gods). In these two verses the heathen gods and the "sons of the gods" seem thus to be equated. And this is manifestly the teaching of Deut. 32. 8, if we adopt the

[13] *Het ontstaan en de ontwickkelung der angelologie onder Israel, Theol. Tijdschr., 1876.*

reading of the Septuagint. The Most High "set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God," each nation having its own deity or guardian angel. This is also the view of Deut. 4. 19, where it is stated that Yahweh "allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven" the various heavenly bodies as objects of worship. And in Dan. 10. 13, 20 the "princes" or patron-angels of Persia and Greece probably represent the gods of these nations. Furthermore, it may be noted that in Deut. 32. 17 and Psa. 106. 36f., the heathen gods and demons (*shedim*) seem to merge into one another. The two ideas are treated as virtually synonymous.

These facts make it clear that the reduction of heathen deities to the plane of "angels" or subordinate spirits was not unknown to Hebrew thought. But the passages in which the idea is expressed are all comparatively late, and are perhaps to be ascribed to the effort of later thinkers to harmonize the supremacy of Yahweh with the fact of heathenism. The earlier and prevailing tendency in the Old Testament was to regard the heathen gods as essentially hostile to Yahweh. The prophets could see nothing good in them. They were vanities and were doomed to destruction.[14] Such an attitude was manifestly unfavorable to the transformation of the gods of the heathen into ministering angels of Yahweh. It is hardly probable, therefore, that the Israelitic belief in angels grew up in this way.

If, however, we substitute for the foreign gods of Kosters' theory as some do, the polytheistic gods and animistic spirits of Israel's pre-Mosaic religion, it can hardly be doubted that we have here an important source of Hebrew angelology. When Yahweh was first proclaimed

[14] Jer. 2. 5, 11; 10. 11; Zeph. 2. 11.

and acclaimed as Israel's God, the older gods and spirits did not pass out of Israelitic thought, nor was their existence denied. They simply sank to a lower grade of being and came more or less directly under the control of Yahweh. Some of them at least were regarded as forming his retinue or council. It was probably in this way also that the heathen belief in superhuman beings of a subordinate rank arose. The gods and spirits of a lower stage of culture became the ministering servants of the gods of a new age. In this regard there was nothing peculiar about the Israelitic belief in angels.

But apart from this common source of the belief in subordinate superhuman beings, George Adam Smith is no doubt right in contending that the belief "must have sprung up in the natural tendency to provide the royal deity of a people with a court, an army, and servants. In the pious minds of early Israel there must have been a kind of necessity to believe and develop this—a necessity imposed *firstly* by the belief in Yahweh's residence as confined to one spot, Sinai or Jerusalem, from which he himself went forth only upon great occasions to the deliverance of his people as a whole; and *secondly* by the unwillingness to conceive of his personal appearance in missions of a menial nature, or to represent him in the human form in which, according to primitive ideas, he could alone hold converse with men." [15] In this field popular imagination had free play. It could create its own objects; and there can hardly be a doubt that this factor played an important role in the development of the Hebrew conception of the angelic world. The idea of a court of heaven or a divine council is one to which we have several references in the early literature. In the

[15] *The Book of the Twelve Prophets,* vol. ii, p. 310.

inaugural vision of Isaiah (Chap. 6) the attendants of Yahweh are termed seraphim, and in 1 Kings 22. 19-22 they are spoken of as "the host of heaven." [16] It is to this "host" or council that the plural pronoun in Gen. 1. 26; 3. 22; and 11. 7, as well as Isa. 6. 8, refers. God here speaks for the angelic beings by whom he was surrounded. In this connection attention may also be directed to the angelic horsemen referred to in 2 Kings 2. 11 and 6. 17. These horsemen figured prominently in the later apocalyptic literature.

The history of Hebrew angelology was marked, as we have already seen, by the gradual merging of two conceptions, that of the sons of *Elohim* and that of the *malakim*. With reference to the origin of the latter conception there is not a little difference of opinion. Some hold that the term did not during the preexilic period denote distinct beings but simply different manifestations of Yahweh. This was true both of the singular and the plural forms of the word. And even if distinct beings were denoted by the term, it is contended that they were not thought of as messengers from God to men. No need of mediation was felt during this early period. Yahweh manifested himself directly to men, appeared among them and spoke to them. The *malakim,* if distinct beings, attended Yahweh, forming a kind of divine court, but they were not mediators. The angelic beings who at the time did enter into relations with men were the sons of *Elohim,* and they were not subject to Yahweh, but were independent beings.

In this view there are some elements of truth. It is true that the angel of Yahweh frequently referred to in the

[16] Compare Josh. 5. 14ff.

preexilic literature is in many instances represented not as a distinct being but simply as a manifestation of Yahweh,[17] and it is also true that there are only a very few instances in the early literature where more than one "angel" or "angel of God" is referred to. Two of the three supernatural visitors who appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre are spoken of as "angels";[18] Jacob in his dream at Bethel saw "the angels of God ascending and descending;"[19] and on his return from Paddan-aram "the angels of God," we read, met him at the place which from this incident was called Mahanaim.[20] In even these instances it has been contended that we simply have manifestations of the one God in a plurality of forms. But this view is forced and unnatural. The "angels" here spoken of were manifestly thought of as distinct beings. There are also a number of cases in which the singular *malak* is used in a way that suggests that one of a class is meant.[21] And in each of these cases "the angel of God" is referred to in a way that reminds one of the *Elohim* in Gen. 3. 22 and Psa. 8. 5. Both are represented as superhuman beings and as having the power to discern good and evil. This seems to imply that the *malakim* were identical with the sons of *Elohim*.

Furthermore, it should be noted that there are a number of passages in which the "angel of Yahweh" is clearly differentiated from Yahweh.[22] The effort has been made

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[17] Judg. 6. 21-24; 13. 20-22; Gen. 16. 8-13, J; 21. 17-19; 48. 15-16, E; Exod. 3. 2-4, J.

[18] Gen. 19. 1, 15, J.

[19] Gen. 28. 12, E.

[20] Gen. 32. 1, E.

[21] 1 Sam. 29. 9; 2 Sam. 14. 17; 19. 27.

[22] Gen. 24. 7, 40, J; Exod. 23. 20, E; 33. 2; Num. 20. 16, E; 2 Sam. 24. 16.

to harmonize these passages with those above cited on the ground that "the mere manifestation of Yahweh creates a distinction between it and Yahweh, though the identity remains." [23] But it is more natural to see in the two groups of passages two variant views. According to one, the angel of Yahweh was simply Yahweh in manifestation; according to the other, he was a distinct being. The latter conception may perhaps have originated as a means of mediating between the belief that Yahweh dwelt at Sinai and the belief that he was present with his people wherever they might be. In any case we have here an angelic being distinct from Yahweh. This being has been identified with the Logos of Christian theology. And in so far as the angel of Yahweh was identical with Yahweh and yet distinct from him, we have in this conception a rather remarkable anticipation of the Christian doctrine of the Son. The outstanding difference between the two conceptions is that in the angel of Yahweh "the self-revealing life of God is not yet human, nor does it exist as a permanent personal life." [24]

It is then an exaggeration to say that the word *malak* during the preexilic period was used only of appearances of Yahweh and that Yahweh during this period stood in such an intimate relation to men that there was no room for mediators between him and them. The very tendency to localize Yahweh at Sinai and Jerusalem would naturally suggest to the popular imagination the need of "messengers" to reveal his presence and convey his word to people separated from these sacred places. It is true

[23] A. B. Davidson, in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible,* vol. i, p. 99.

[24] Schultz, *Old Testament Theology,* vol. ii, p. 223.

that Yahweh communicated his word directly to the pre-exilic prophets. No use was made of angelic mediators. But it is also clear that such "messengers" were known to the people. Only exegetical violence can remove the evidence of it from the text. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that beginning with the exile we have a marked development of Hebrew angelology. This development was due to various causes, partly perhaps Babylonian and Persian influences, but especially the increasing stress on the supremacy and transcendence of Yahweh. The divine transcendence did not simply carry with it the thought that God was so far removed from terrestrial life that he stood in need of intermediate agencies; it augmented the sense of his greatness and so created the feeling that it was unworthy of his august Being to be concerned with the details and menial tasks of life.

A. B. Davidson has argued that what we have at the time of the exile and after the return is not "a development in angelology," but, rather, "a movement in the direction of hypostatizing the Spirit of God." The angelic beings in Ezekiel and Zechariah were simply symbols of the Divine Spirit "objectivized." And the later idea, we are told, of patron and ruling angels, such as we find in Daniel, was due among other causes to "a tendency to personify abstract conceptions such as the spirit of a nation, and a further tendency to locate these personified forces in the supersensible world, from whence they ruled the destinies of men."[25] This view no doubt contains some truth. The personifying tendency of the Jewish mind during the exilic and postexilic period was probably an important cooperant factor in the development of the belief in subordinate superhuman beings. But angels

[25] Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible,* vol. i, pp. 95f.

thus "born" were no less angels than similar beings handed down from tradition or borrowed from neighboring peoples. Exilic and postexilic angelology, even if it had its chief source in the personification of the Divine Spirit, was on that account none the less angelology.

Three lines of development may be observed in the history of later Old Testament angelology. *First,* angels came to be regarded as mediators of the prophetic word and intercessors with God. The earlier prophets had received all their messages direct from God. Ezekiel was the first to whom God spoke indirectly through an angel[26] as well as directly.[27] To Zechariah the divine instructions all came indirectly through angels.[28] And Daniel received in the same way the explanation of his visions.[29] The idea of an angelic intercessor appears first in Zechariah.[30] A somewhat similar conception is found also in Daniel. Michael is there represented as the guardian angel of Israel. He is "the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people." [31] But elsewhere in the Old Testament there is no reference to the angels as intercessors.[32] It was in the extracanonical apocalyptic literature and in the later practice of the Christian Church that the idea came to its fullest development.

In the *second* place angels tended during the postexilic period to become distinct personalities. In earlier times function had completely predominated over personality.

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[26] Ezek. 40. 3; 43. 6.

[27] 44. 2.

[28] 1. 8ff.; 2. 1ff.; 3. 1ff.; 4. 1ff.; 5. 5ff.; 6. 4ff.

[29] 4. 13, 23; 7. 16; 8. 13ff.; 9. 21ff.; 10. 5ff., 15ff.; 12. 5ff.

[30] 1. 12.

[31] 12. 1.

[32] Job 5. 1 and 33. 23 are often cited as expressions of the idea of angelic intercession, but erroneously.

The angels had no names, no distinctive individuality.[33] They were simply members of a class. Even the angel of Yahweh seems at times not to have been distinguished from other angels.[34] But when we come to Zechariah, this indefiniteness has apparently been overcome. The angel of Yahweh here designates a particular angel.[35] And in Daniel there are two angels that bear personal names, Gabriel[36] and Michael.[37] Michael was the guardian of Judah, and Gabriel brought the word of Yahweh to the prophet. In the Apocryphal literature two other names are added. We read in the Book of Tobit[38] of an angel by the name of Raphael, "one of the seven holy angels," and in Enoch[39] and 2 Esdras 5. 20 there is mention of an angel by the name of Uriel.

The *third* line of development in postexilic angelology was the creation of different ranks or orders of angels. This idea was implicit in the earlier conception of the angels as a host or army. We read, for instance, in Joshua 5. 13ff. of "the prince of the Lord's host," an angelic being who was evidently thought of as the leader of the heavenly host. But the idea of an organized body of angels was not carried any further in the earlier literature. In Enoch[40] the cherubim and seraphim are regarded as different orders of angels, but this view is nowhere expressed in the Old Testament. In the ninth chapter of Ezekiel seven angels of judgment are referred

[33] Gen. 32. 29, J.
[34] 1 Kings 19. 5, 7; 2 Sam. 24. 16.
[35] 1. 11f.; 3. 1, 5ff.
[36] 8. 15ff.
[37] 10. 13, 21; 12. 1.
[38] 12. 15.
[39] 9. 1, etc.
[40] 61. 10.

to, but that they had any connection with the later doctrine of seven angels[41] or with the seven great spirits of Persian mythology is doubtful. In Zechariah, however, there are clear indications of differences of rank. The Angel of Yahweh is here a judge before whom other angels stand as servants,[42] and "the angel that talked with me"—the Interpreting Angel—received his instructions, in one instance at least, not directly from Yahweh, but from another angel.[43] In Daniel these distinctions in rank are still more marked. Here we read of angelic "princes," and "chief" or "great princes." [44] And in the subsequent apocalyptic literature we find an elaborate hierarchy of angelic beings, "mighty regencies of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones." "The imagination ran riot on the rank, classes, and names of angels." [45] But along with this increasing interest in angelology in postexilic Judaism there went also a counter tendency. The great Priestly Code makes no direct mention of angels, and the priestly Chronicler does so only seldom. This is also true of such Apocryphal books as Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, and Maccabees. In New Testament times this tendency was represented by the Sadducees.[46] It may have been their belief that the Law was the complete expression of the divine will, and that with it in their possession there was no need of mediating angels. More likely, however, their attitude on this point was due to rationalistic skepticism. The earnest people of the day took seriously the belief in angels, and accepted the

[41] Tobit 12. 15; Rev. 8. 2.
[42] 3. 1, 4.
[43] 2. 3-4.
[44] 10. 13, 20; 12. 1.
[45] W. H. Bennett in *Encyclopædia Britannica,* vol. ii, p. 5.
[46] Acts 23. 8.

fact of their existence as unquestioningly as they did that of God himself.

The angels, according to Old Testament teaching, belonged to the *Elohim* world, and as a result shared to some extent in the qualities of the divine nature. They were "holy" in the ancient sense of the term. They were possessed of supernatural knowledge.[47] They existed before the creation of the world.[48] Whether they were themselves thought of as having been created is a question. In earlier times they probably were not, but in such late passages as Psa. 148. 2-5 and Neh. 9. 6 they seem to be included in the list of created objects. They were regarded apparently as sustaining a close relation to the stars.[49] Even so early a passage as the Song of Deborah seems to refer to this relation.[50] In their essential nature the angels were looked upon as spirits,[51] though they are nowhere in the Old Testament declared to be such.[52] Though invisible to ordinary sight, they revealed themselves to the divinely opened eyes of the servant of the prophet as "horses and chariots of fire." [53] By this it was meant that they shared in the ethereal and luminous substance of the heavenly beings. At times they are represented as eating and drinking and walking like men,[54] but at other times they appear as quite superior to human needs.[55] And the general view was that they were

[47] 2 Sam. 14. 17; compare Gen. 3. 22.
[48] Job. 38. 6f.
[49] Job 38. 7; Deut. 4. 19; Isa. 24. 21.
[50] Judg. 5. 20.
[51] 1 Kings 22. 21.
[52] Compare Heb. 1. 14.
[53] 2 Kings 6. 17; compare Num. 22. 23-27.
[54] Gen. 18. 8; 19. 16, J.
[55] Judg. 6. 19ff.; 13. 16ff.

exempt from the common burdens and limitations of human life. They might appear and disappear at will, unhampered by the ordinary laws of earthly existence.

When angels appeared to men, it was usually in human form. Indeed, they are frequently spoken of as "men." [56] This, however, does not mean that they were thought of as permanently having the human form. What form or shape they may have had when withdrawn from human sight is not clear. If the seraphim of Isaiah's vision were representative of angelic beings as they appear in the heavenly temple, we might conclude that angels in their celestial abode were composite beings. But there is no indication anywhere that the seraphim ever assumed the common human form, or that angels after manifesting themselves to men reverted to the form of seraphim. Indeed, it is a question whether the seraphim may be regarded as angels at all. In the broader sense of the term they no doubt were. They were subordinate supernatural beings and ministering servants of Yahweh. But if we take the description of angels elsewhere found in the Old Testament as typical of the class, it is evident that the seraphim belonged to a different order of beings. It is not certain whether Isaiah meant to represent them as having a human body or not, but in any case their posession of wings gave to them an essentially different appearance from that of the angels elsewhere spoken of. "Angels have no wings in the Old Testament." [57] In Jacob's dream they do not fly between heaven and earth, but ascend and descend by means of a ladder. The idea of winged angels belongs to a later

[56] Gen. 18. 2, 16, 22; 32. 24, J; Josh. 5. 13; Ezek. 9. 2, 3, 11; 43. 6; Dan. 3. 25; 9. 21; 10. 16, 18.

[57] H. G. Mitchell, *Isaiah, a Study of Chapters I-XII*, p. 162.

date. They are first mentioned in Enoch 61. 1. If referred to anywhere in the Old Testament, it is only in such late passages as 1 Chron. 21. 16 and Dan. 9. 21, and even there only by implication, if at all.

Closely related to the seraphim were the cherubim. The cherubim are mentioned in several different connections in the Old Testament. They appear in the story of paradise as guardians of the tree of life;[58] they figure prominently in Hebrew art, in the adornments of the ark, the tabernacle and the temple;[59] they are identified with the four living creatures in the vision of Ezekiel who support the throne of Yahweh;[60] they serve in Hebrew poetry as symbols of the storm-clouds.[61] The descriptions of their appearance differ somewhat. In Ezekiel 10 they each have four faces, but in Ezek. 41. 18f. only two, and from what is said of them in connection with the ark one would naturally suppose that they each had only one face. Whether this was the face of a man or an ox is uncertain. The diversity of representation was due to the fact that the cherubim were products of the imagination and hence had no fixed form, though they do regularly appear as winged beings. In the latter regard they resemble the seraphim, and in later times the two were identified.[62] In the Old Testament, however, the two are clearly distinguished. "The cherubim carry or veil God, and show the presence of his glory in the earthly sanctuary. But the seraphim stand before God as ministering servants in his heavenly sanctuary." [63]

[58] Gen. 3. 24, J.
[59] Exod. 25. 18ff.; 26. 1. 31, P; 1 Kings 6. 23; 8. 6f.
[60] 10. 20; 1. 5ff.
[61] Psa. 18. 10.
[62] Rev. 4. 8.
[63] H. Schultz, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. ii, pp. 238f.

Both classes of beings were angels in the broader sense of the term, but both differed in appearance and to some extent in function from the *malakim*.

Angels, according to Old Testament teaching, served various purposes. They formed a divine court or council or army,[64] and thus contributed to the conception of the divine majesty. They acted as ministers of the divine wrath, destroying those who disobeyed or defied the divine will.[65] They interpreted the divine visions to the later prophets,[66] and explained to men the divine purpose in their afflictions.[67] But in particular they served as mediators of the divine care and favor.

> "He will give his angels charge over thee,
> To keep thee in all thy ways.
> They shall bear thee up in their hands,
> Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." [68]

It is here that the real religious significance of the belief in angels is to be found. Belief in them gave "visibility to the working of God in Providence." It made objective, concrete, and special the divine care and supervision of human life. It embodied in a form that the imagination could readily grasp the thought of the divine guidance and the divine favor.

Thus far we have said nothing of the moral character of the angels. In a certain sense they had none. They were merely servants of Yahweh. Apart from him they

[64] Isa. 6. 8; 1 Kings 22. 19; Job 1. 6; 2. 1; Psa. 89. 5, 7; 103. 20-22.
[65] Gen. 19. 13; 2 Sam. 24. 16; 2 Kings 19. 35; Ezek. 9. 1ff.; Psa. 78. 49.
[66] Ezek. 40. 3; Zech. 1. 9; Dan. 7. 16.
[67] Job 33. 23.
[68] Psa. 91. 11f.

had no will and no purpose. They simply did his bidding. Even the angels or spirits that are spoken of as "evil" or are represented as doers of evil,[69] were not evil in and of themselves. They did evil only in the sense that Yahweh himself did,[70] and only in fulfillment of his will. Their own character did not come into the question. They were not in the proper sense of the term morally responsible agents. Such at least seems to have been the view of earlier times. And yet the tendency must early have arisen to think of angels as superior to men ethically as well as otherwise.[71] Such is manifestly the view of Job. Here we read,

"Behold, he putteth no trust in his servants;
And his angels he chargeth with folly:
How much more them that dwell in houses of clay!" [72]

As compared with God angels were imperfect, but as compared with men they were the purest of beings.

The idea of fallen angels is nowhere expressed in the Old Testament. It was first taught in the Book of Enoch.[73] A certain basis for it, however, or at least for the belief in the existence of supernatural beings of an evil character, is found in the Old Testament. We have there the idea of demons, beings hostile to Yahweh or independent of him. These beings no doubt figured prominently in the popular religion,[74] but only one of them

[69] Judg. 9. 23; 1 Sam. 16. 14-23; 2 Sam. 24. 16; 1 Kings 22. 19-23; 2 Kings 19. 35; Psa. 78. 49; Job 33. 22.

[70] Ezek. 14. 9; Amos 3. 6; Isa. 45. 7.

[71] 1 Sam. 29. 9.

[72] Job 4. 18f.; see also 15. 15f.; 25. 5f.

[73] 6-15; see Jude 6 and 2 Pet. 2. 4.

[74] Deut. 32. 17; Psa. 106. 37; Lev. 17. 7; 2 Chron. 11. 15; 2 Kings 23. 8; Isa. 13. 21; 34. 14. See *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, by Brown, Driver, Briggs, p. 972.

received recognition in the Old Testament cultus. This was Azazel,[75] who plays a great role in the Book of Enoch.[76] He there appears as a leader of the evil spirits, a temporary rival of Satan, who because of his wickedness is bound hand and foot and held in the desert "under rough and jagged rocks" to await the fire of the great Day of Judgment. In Leviticus he is apparently thought of as a wilderness demon, a satyr or goatlike figure. To him the sins of the people laden on a goat were sent on the Day of Atonement. This ceremonial was a symbolical declaration that the land and the people had been purged of their guilt.

But besides the demons there were other superhuman beings who stood apart from Yahweh and were to some extent hostile to him. In Gen. 6. 1-4, as already pointed out, reference is made to certain "sons of God," who dealt in a high-handed way with the daughters of men. In Isa. 24. 21-22 we are told of supernatural beings, "the host of the high ones on high," who were imprisoned as a punishment for intruding on the sovereign rights of Yahweh. And in Daniel the princes or guardian angels of Persia and Greece appear as opponents of Michael and another celestial visitant, who manifestly represent the divine will.[77]

More important, however, than any of these is the figure of Satan. The Hebrew word *satan* had the general meaning of "adversary," and in the earlier literature was used exclusively in that sense. "The angel of Jehovah placed himself in the way for an adversary

[75] Lev. 16.
[76] 8-10.
[77] 10. 13, 20.

against" Balaam.[78] "Jehovah raised up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite." [79] The word is also used as a verb, "to be or act as an adversary." [80] Not until we come to Zechariah (B. C. 520) was it applied to a particular personage. And here it is not used as a proper name. The being to whom it is applied is called not Satan but *the* Satan, or Adversary.[81] The Adversary, it is said, was standing at the side of Joshua the high priest "to be his adversary." The word *satan* is here used both as a noun and a verb. The particular function of the Satan in this connection was to represent "the justice of Yahweh as contrasted with his mercy." He was a kind of *advocatus diaboli* whose task it was "not to prove so much as to recall the iniquity of" Joshua, the representative of Judah, "and insist upon the infliction of the appropriate penalty." [82] The rebuke administered to the Adversary in verse 2 is evidence that Yahweh did not approve of the hardness and lack of compassion that he was showing in the performance of his office. A certain tendency to evil is thus observable in Zechariah's conception of the Satan, but the Satan is not yet conceived of as hostile to Yahweh. He is, rather, a minister of Yahweh.

This is clearly the view of the book of Job (about B. C. 350). The Satan is here one of the sons of God.[83] But the work in which he is engaged is even more distinctly evil than that attributed to him in Zechariah. He is skeptical of human nature, takes a low view of it. Every

[78] Num. 22. 22, 32, J.

[79] 1 Kings 11. 14; compare 5. 4; 1 Sam. 29. 4; 2 Sam. 19. 22.

[80] Psa. 38. 20; 109. 4.

[81] 3. 1-5.

[82] H. G. Mitchell, "Zechariah" in *International Critical Commentary*, p. 151.

[83] 1. 6-12; 2. 1-10.

man, he believes, has his price.[84] And this view he is bent on confirming. He pursues Job relentlessly, doing everything in his power to break the bond of faith between him and God. He acts the part of a real tempter, and that without any good motive. He is Job's enemy, seeking to drive him to despair. In all this, it is true, he acts on his own initiative, differing in this regard from the nameless spirit who was sent to deceive Ahab.[85] But he is still a minister of God, operating under the divine permission, and not an independent principle of evil.

In 1 Chron. 21. 1, written perhaps about B. C. 250, Satan first appears as a proper name. His personality is here distinctly recognized. In 2 Sam. 24. 1 Yahweh is said to have incited David to an act of disobedience, namely, that of numbering the people. But in Chronicles this temptation is attributed to Satan. "Between the two statements (an interval of probably two or three hundred years) the feeling had grown up that instigation to evil could not properly be referred to God; an evil spirit becomes the agent of sin." [86] The serpent of Genesis 3 was first interpreted as meaning Satan in the Wisdom of Solomon (2. 23), a book dating from about B. C. 100. This interpretation carried with it the idea that sin and death were introduced into the world through satanic agency. And with this idea went naturally a marked development of demonology. Satan appears in the Jewish literature of the New Testament period and to some extent in the New Testament itself as the chief personification of evil, as the leader of the hosts of darkness and as prince of this world. This development was probably due

[84] 2. 4.
[85] 1 Kings 22. 19-23.
[86] C. H. Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 157.

in part to foreign influence, to the dualism of Persian and Greek thought, but it was also due to the growing moral refinement of the idea of God. It was increasingly believed that God was essentially benevolent in his nature and that he could not, therefore, be responsible for all the evil of the world. Faith consequently felt a certain relief in turning over the ills and wickedness of life to a being hostile to him.

But neither the conception of Satan nor that of angels formed an essential part of biblical teaching. They were natural and perhaps inevitable accompaniments of the developing faith in the divine goodness and transcendence. But they constituted no necessary part of this faith. They owed their origin and growth in large part to conditions of life and thought that have now ceased to be operative. At the best they were simply adjuncts to the idea of God and derived whatever value they possessed from the help they rendered the imagination in conceiving aright the thought of God.

III

MAN AND REDEMPTION

CHAPTER X

THE NATURE OF MAN

Religion centers in the thought of God, but the thought of God becomes a source of inspiration only in so far as it elevates the conception of man. The conception of man is therefore second in importance only to that of God. The value of any religion and of any system of philosophy may be tested by its teaching on these two points.

As regards the idea of God the Old Testament, as we have seen, is reasonably clear and satisfactory. The development through which the Hebrews passed before they arrived at a complete monotheism may be somewhat obscure and a subject of dispute. But the ideas concerning the divine unity, spirituality, and righteousness ultimately attained and reflected in the larger part of the Old Testament are on the whole such as to commend themselves to modern religious thought. The situation, however, with reference to the conception of man is less satisfactory. Anthropology lagged far behind theology, and not until the very close of the Old Testament period did a conception of man begin to arise that satisfies the developed religious consciousness. Much of what we find in the Old Testament concerning the nature of man is consequently of an imperfect and sub-Christian character.

There are three beliefs with reference to man in which religion is especially interested. These are his spirituality, freedom, and immortality. The last is of such import-

ance that its discussion is reserved for a separate chapter. Here we shall consider the teaching of the Old Testament in so far as it bears upon the first two.

"Spirituality," as we have seen, is a term that has various meanings. As applied to God there are three that may be distinguished: the metaphysical, dynamic and ethical. These three meanings appear also in our conception of human spirituality. Man is spiritual in the sense that he has a soul, a nonfleshly nature; he may also be said to be spiritual in so far as there is within him a vital power that enables him to rise above the weakness of the flesh; he is still further spiritual in so far as he is guided in his conduct by ethical and religious considerations rather than by his selfish and fleshly nature. It is in the last sense that spirituality is commonly used when applied to man. But the other two uses of the term are important, and religion is interested in the spirituality of man in all three senses. It is interested in the ethical, but it is also interested in those other qualities that lift man above the plane of the sense-life with its weakness and inevitable decay, and link him with the divine. What religion seeks to find in man is something permanent and abiding, something that elevates him above the world of change and makes him share in the life of God. It consequently turns away from the things of sense and fixes its thought upon the soul, the inner life of man that stands nearest to the divine. But it is only gradually that the immanent logic of religion works itself out into satisfactory concepts. And the question with which we are at present concerned is as to how far this was accomplished in the Old Testament. In what sense and to what extent did the Old Testament teach the spirituality of man?

In answering this question we are first confronted with

the fact that the Old Testament writers had no distinctive psychology and no distinctive physiology. Their ideas in these fields were those current among the people of their own day. They did not seek to introduce a new theory of the constitution of human nature, nor did they attempt to deal in a more systematic way with the subject. They simply reflected the common thought of the day, and their language was that of the people; it lacked the definiteness and precision of a scientific treatise. No clearly defined doctrine of man is consequently to be found in the Old Testament. What we have, for the most part at least, is the popular beliefs and the popular speech of the day. But in these there is a considerable uniformity, so that it is proper to speak of an Old Testament teaching concerning the nature of man.

There are four terms of special significance in what might be called the physio-psychology of the Old Testament. These are "flesh" (*basar*), "soul" (*nephesh*), "spirit" (*ruach*), and "heart" (*leb*). All of these terms are used in a variety of senses. Here we are concerned with them simply as designations of component elements in human nature. The physical basis of life was expressed by the term *basar*. The Hebrews had no word exactly corresponding to the Greek *soma* and the English "body," but *basar* was often used in an equivalent sense.[1] The *basar,* or body, however, as conceived by the Hebrews, was not a mere material mechanism. It was a product of the union of dead inert matter, the dust from the ground (*aphar*), with the live-giving spirit (*neshamah* or *ruach*). It thus had a double character. It was not only

[1] Exod. 30. 32; Lev. 6. 10; 14. 9; 19. 28; Num. 8. 7; 1 Kings 21. 27; Job 14. 22; Psa. 16. 9; 63. 1; Eccl. 2. 3; 4. 5; Isa. 10. 18.

matter, but, as Davidson puts it, "ensouled matter." It had a vital and psychical side to its being as well as a physical. It was represented as sinning,[2] suffering,[3] trembling with fear,[4] living trustfully,[5] longing,[6] singing for joy.[7] In a similar way psychical functions were ascribed to the individual sense-organs. The eye was spoken of as unsatisfied,[8] proud,[9] humble,[10] evil;[11] the ear as seeking knowledge[12] and bestowing blessing;[13] the tongue as framing deceits and devising mischiefs.[14] In such expressions as these it might at first be thought that the language was purely metaphorical. But when we take into account the general physiological and psychological notions current in antiquity this is seen to be improbable. Frazer tells us that "the savage commonly believes that by eating the flesh of an animal or man he acquires not only the physical, but even the moral and intellectual qualities which were characteristic of that animal or man." [15] And among ancient peoples generally a similar idea of the close connection between the physical and psychical seems to have prevailed. We localize the immediate physical antecedents of sensation in the brain. But the Hebrews

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[2] Eccl. 5. 6.
[3] Eccl. 11. 10.
[4] Psa. 119. 120.
[5] Psa. 16. 9.
[6] Psa. 63. 1.
[7] Psa. 84. 2.
[8] Eccl. 1. 8; Prov. 27. 20.
[9] Psa. 131. 1.
[10] Job 22. 29.
[11] Prov. 23. 6.
[12] Prov. 18. 15.
[13] Job 29. 11.
[14] Psa. 50. 19; 52. 2.
[15] *The Golden Bough* (second edition), vol. ii, p. 353.

had no knowledge of the nervous system. They had no distinct term for "nerve," and the word "brain" does not occur in the Old Testament. No doubt they had some way of designating the physical substance of the brain. Perhaps they spoke of it as "the marrow of the head." But they did not look upon it as the center of consciousness. The heart, as we shall see, came nearer to serving that function in their thought. But even it was not regarded as the sole organ of consciousness. Consciousness was, rather, conceived as inherent in the flesh or the blood, and hence might be ascribed to the individual sense organs or to the body as a whole.

The antithesis between soul and body was far less marked with the Hebrews than with us. The distinction between the two was made, but the tendency was to view life as a unity, and in this unity the body rather than the soul was the characteristic element. Hence the word "flesh" was used to designate sensuous creatures generally, men as well as animals. "All flesh," a common expression especially in P, meant either mankind,[16] or the animal world,[17] or both.[18] The essential and distinctive element in human nature by way of contrast with the divine was also not infrequently expressed by the word "flesh." "The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit." [19] Flesh here carries with it the idea of weakness, frailty, and dependence. It is this that characterizes man as over against God. The contrast between flesh and spirit was thus not

[16] Gen. 6. 12; Num. 16. 22; Deut. 5. 26; Isa. 40. 6; Jer. 12. 12; Ezek. 21. 4.

[17] Gen. 7. 15, 16; 8. 17.

[18] Gen. 6. 17; 7. 21; 9. 11; Lev. 17. 14; Num. 18. 15; Job 34. 15; Psa. 136. 25.

[19] Isa. 31. 3.

ethical. Flesh nowhere in the Old Testament is looked upon as evil in and of itself. If it had been, it would not have been used in sacrifices and for food, nor would the word "flesh" have been employed as a figure to denote tenderness or ethical sensitiveness, as it is in Ezek. 36. 26. Fleshly weakness might lead to sin, but it was not identified with it. Rather was the guilt of sin extenuated by the fact that it grew out of sensuous weakness.[20] Sensuous weakness could not therefore have been regarded as itself morally evil. If it had been, it could not have served as an excuse for or palliation of sin. The idea of an ethical dualism of body and soul was remote from Hebrew thought. Yet in the contrast between flesh and spirit, first clearly stated by Isaiah,[21] we have the beginning of the development that led later to the Pauline doctrine of the flesh with its distinct ethical implications.

Closely connected with the "flesh," yet clearly distinguished from it, was the soul, or *nephesh*. It would be a mistake to read our modern ideas into the Hebrew conception of the soul; yet there is this point of agreement between the modern and the ancient view, that the soul in both represents a principle distinct from the flesh or body. The Hebrew *nephesh* might originate in connection with the body and disappear with it, yet it was conceived of as a distinct substance or entity. It seems to have been the Hebrew view that, as the body was the product of the union of the "dust" with the life-giving spirit, and hence might be spoken of as "ensouled matter," so the *nephesh*, or soul, was due to the union of the life-giving spirit with the dust or flesh, and hence might be called "incar-

[20] Job 4. 17-19; 14. 1-14; Psa. 78. 38-39.
[21] Isa. 31. 3.

nate spirit." [22] Flesh and soul were thus intimately connected with each other, indeed, mutually dependent upon one another, yet they rooted in different principles, one in dust or matter, the other in breath or spirit.

Spirit as conceived by the Hebrews was not, as we have seen, an immaterial form of existence. It was, rather, a breathlike substance, a rarified form of matter. Indeed, the soul was identified by the Hebrews with the breath. The reason for this is evident. Breath is a sign of life. When breath ceases life vanishes. Hence it was easy to conclude that the soul or principle of life was identical with the breath. It was for the same reason also that the soul was brought into such intimate connection with the blood. Loss of blood after a certain point is accompanied by loss of consciousness and finally of life. Hence we read, "The life [*nephesh*] of the flesh is in the blood," [23] and again, "The blood is the life [*nephesh*]." [24] A still further reason for the identification of the soul with the blood may perhaps be found in the visible reek of shed blood. This would suggest to the primitive mind that there was in the blood a breathlike or soullike substance.

The quasi-physical character of the soul and its close connection with the body did not, however, interfere with an essentially spiritual conception of its functions. The *nephesh* was identified more frequently with the principle of life than is the case with the soul in modern times, but this vital function was in no way inconsistent with the psychical and personal uses of the term. It was the same soul that formed the basis of the conscious as of the physical life and that constituted the agent in both. There are,

[22] Gen. 2. 7, J.
[23] Lev. 17. 11.
[24] Deut. 12. 23.

then, three different senses in which the word *nephesh* is used—the vital, psychical, and personal—and it is used with about equal frequency in each. According to H. W. Robinson,[25] the word occurs seven hundred and fifty-four times in the Old Testament; in two hundred and eighty-two instances it refers to the principle of life,[26] in two hundred and forty-nine to conscious activities of one kind or another,[27] and in two hundred and twenty-three to the personal agent, serving in the latter case either as an equivalent of the personal pronoun[28] or as a designation of the individual man.[29] The *nephesh* was thus plainly regarded as the seat of the conscious and personal life, but it was not the exclusive seat of this higher life. Psychical functions, as we have seen, were attributed to the flesh as well as to the soul, and the term *basar* as well as *nephesh* was used to designate the total life of man. It should further be noted that no distinction is made between the psychical functions attributed to the flesh and those attributed to the soul. One might have supposed that the higher psychical activities would be attributed to the soul and the lower to the flesh. But such is not the case. The highest spiritual activities are at times assigned to the flesh,[30] while the sensations of physical hunger[31] and sexual passion[32] are attributed to the soul. It is evident from this that soul and body did not in Hebrew thought constitute a dualism in the strict

[25] *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, p. 16.
[26] For example, 1 Kings 19. 10.
[27] For example, Gen. 42. 21.
[28] For example, Num. 23. 10.
[29] For example, Gen. 12. 5.
[30] Psa. 63. 1.
[31] Prov. 27. 7.
[32] Gen. 34. 8, E.

sense of the term. They were correlative rather than antithetic terms. Though rooted in independent principles, they formed a unity. What we, then, actually have in Old Testament psychology is an "explanation of the unity of personality along two parallel lines of primitive thought, according as the (supposed) immediate organ or the more ultimate and mysterious breath might be made the starting-point." [33]

The question has been raised as to whether there is any basis in the Old Testament for the doctrine of the preexistence of the soul. Some have interpreted the latter part of 1 Sam. 2. 6 as referring to "a sojourn of unborn beings in the realm of Sheol," and it has also been argued that Job[34] in speaking of his mother's womb, from which he had come and to which he was to return, had in mind the womb of Sheol. But neither of these interpretations has a sound basis. In Psa. 139. 15 the writer speaks of himself as having been "curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." As this is a late psalm it is not impossible that there may here be a reference to the soul's preexistence in Sheol, but what we more probably have is simply a description of the mysterious origin of human life. The general conception of the soul current among the Hebrews was unfavorable to the belief in its preexistence. Body and soul in the Old Testament went together. The soul had no separate and detached existence either before its union with the body or after the dissolution of the union. The inhabitants of the netherworld were not souls but shades (*rephaim*). The *shades* were shadowlike images of our earthly life. In this vague sense they no doubt represented a continuation

[33] H. W. Robinson, *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, p. 21.
[34] 1. 21.

of the existence of both soul and body,[35] and in a similar way it is conceivable that the Hebrews might also have thought of the soul as preexistent. But there is no evidence of such a belief. The preexistence of the soul was a Hellenic doctrine that did not gain access into Hebrew thought until the postcanonical period. The earliest distinct reference to it is in the Wisdom of Solomon (8. 19f.).

Another point that has been much discussed is as to whether the Old Testament favors traducianism or creationism. Is the soul of the child derived from its parents or is it created directly by God? This is a problem that can hardly be said to have existed for the Old Testament writers, and it is doubtful if their teaching can be said to be favorable to either view. The native realism of the human mind would naturally lead to traducianism, and this is no doubt the tendency represented by much of the Old Testament. It is also argued that traducianism is implied in the Old Testament doctrine of inherited sin,[36] in the account of the creation of woman,[37] and in the representation of creation as coming to an absolute end in man.[38] But over against this attention may be directed to the vivid sense of the divine immanence in the Old Testament, the tendency to ascribe everything to God as its source. The origin of the soul and the total life of man is frequently referred to the creative activity of God.[39] Between these two tendencies there was, however, no conscious conflict in the Old Testament. As

[35] Job 14. 22.

[36] Psa. 51. 5; Deut. 5. 9; Job 14. 4.

[37] Gen. 2. 21-24, J.

[38] Gen. 1. 26 to 2. 3, P.

[39] Psa. 33. 15; 95. 6; 119. 73; Zech. 12. 1; Job 10. 8; 33. 4; Jer. 1. 5; 38. 16; Isa. 57. 16.

good a statement as any of the teaching of the Old Testament on this point is that of Schultz. "Biblical traducianism," he says, "is, indeed, opposed to that scholastic creationism, which conceives of a soul distinct from the body, being called forth directly from God, but not to the religious creationism which is convinced that each individual is an immediate expression of God's creative will." [40]

Thus far it has been assumed that according to Old Testament psychology there were only two component elements in human nature, body and soul. But besides the word *nephesh,* or soul, we often meet with the word *ruach,* or spirit, and this has given rise to the question as to whether the Old Testament does not teach a threefold instead of a twofold division of human nature, trichotomy instead of dichotomy. "Spirit" and "soul," it is urged, are not synonymous terms. They designate distinct elements in human nature. What the exact relation of these two elements to each other is, is admittedly not clear. But much ingenuity has been expended in the effort to solve the problem. The most notable attempt was that by the distinguished Franz Delitzsch. "Spirit and soul," he says, "are of one nature, but of distinct substances. If anyone would rather say that the soul is a Tertium, or third existence, not substantially indeed, but potentially independent, between spirit and body, but by its nature pertaining to the side of the spirit, we have no objection to it. . . . Although the soul originated out of the essence of the spirit, it is not of absolutely identical condition with it, or, as we prefer saying, it is not one and the same substance with the spirit, but a substance that

[40] *Old Testament Theology,* vol. ii, p. 182.

stands in a secondary relation with it. It is of one nature with it, but not one distinct nature, as the Son and the Spirit are of one nature with the Father, but still not the same hypostases. . . . The spirit is the inbreathing of the Godhead, and the soul is the outbreathing of the spirit. . . . The spirit is the inward being of the soul, and the soul is the external nature of the spirit. . . . The spirit is the image of the triune Godhead, but the soul is the copy of the image."[41] Delitzsch regarded this theory as the key to biblical psychology, declaring that with his insight into and acceptance of it his "confused materials of biblical psychology formed themselves as if spontaneously into a systematic unity." But this systematic unity was subjective. It is not to be found in Scripture.

There are two verses in the New Testament that are frequently adduced in support of a threefold division of human nature, 1 Thess. 5. 23 and Heb. 4. 12, but it is doubtful if either of them requires such an interpretation. There is also one verse in the Old Testament that is often so interpreted, Gen. 2. 7. "This one verse," says Delitzsch, "is of such deep significance that interpretation can never exhaust it; it is the foundation of all true anthropology and psychology."[42] R. H. Charles also attributes to this verse a special significance, though in a different sense from Delitzsch. He finds in it a different view of human nature from that represented by the Old Testament as a whole. Here "man is represented as a trichotomy of spirit, soul and body: the spirit is the breath of God, and the soul only a function of the quickened body. According to this view, when the spirit is with-

[41] *System of Biblical Psychology*, pp. 116, 117, 118, 119.
[42] Ibid., p. 90.

drawn the personality is extinguished at death." [43] This view he finds reflected also in Eccl. 12. 7. But this is taking the language of Gen. 2. 7 in too strict and precise a sense. "All that seems in question here is just the giving of vitality to man. There seems no allusion to man's immaterial being, to his spiritual element. It is a picture of his endowment with vitality. Vitality is communicated by God, and he is here pictorially represented as communicating it by breathing into man's nostrils that breath which is the sign of life." [44]

That *ruach* did not denote a third element in human nature, distinct from the *nephesh,* is evident from the fact that it is often used synonymously with *nephesh* as a designation both of the principle of vitality[45] and the resultant psychical life.[46] In the former sense it is used thirty-nine times in the Old Testament, and in the latter seventy-four. The latter use seems to have been rather late in its development. At least it did not become common until the exilic and postexilic period. In the former sense, that of vitality or life-energy, *ruach* appears in a number of early passages,[47] but not until the time of Ezekiel does it seem to have been used to denote "the *normal* breath-soul as the principle of life in man." [48] From that time on, however, it became a common designation of the psychical element in man.

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[43] *Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments,* pp. 124f.

[44] A. B. Davidson, *Theology of the Old Testament,* p. 194.

[45] For example, Gen. 6. 17; 45. 27; Judg. 15. 19; 1 Sam. 30. 12; Ezek. 37. 5; Psa. 104. 29.

[46] For example, Isa. 26. 9; Exod. 28. 3; Psa. 51. 12; Judg. 8. 3; Isa. 19. 14; Prov. 16. 18.

[47] Gen. 45. 27, E; Judg. 15. 19; 1 Sam. 30. 12; 1 Kings 10. 5.

[48] Ezek. 37. 5, 6, 8.

But while *ruach* and *nephesh* thus denoted the same component element in human nature, the two terms were not mere synonyms. *Ruach* meant originally air in motion, and so was applied both to the wind and to the breathing or panting of men and animals in excitement or distress. The latter use was naturally extended so as to include the mental states that gave rise to quick and vigorous breathing. In this way *ruach* came to denote the stronger and stormier emotions, such as anger, grief, zeal,[49] while the milder feelings were attributed to the *nephesh*. But a far more important difference between the two terms is found in the fact that *ruach* was used of God as well as man. Indeed, the primary reference was to God. *Nephesh* was a corollary of *basar* ("flesh"), but not so *ruach*. *Ruach* was characteristic of deity, and in this sense stood in a certain antithesis to flesh. When, then, *ruach* came to be applied to the breath-soul of man, a certain affinity was established between the human and the divine. The higher association of the term with the Spirit of God inevitably had its influence on the conception of the human spirit. "The similarity of terminology kept open a heavenward door, so to speak, in human nature, and no more striking case could be found of the influence of language on the thought it shapes even whilst it serves." [50] It is here that the most significant fact connected with Old Testament psychology is to be found. No parallel to it occurs in any ethnic system. "Spirit," says Laidlaw, "is not so used by Plato, by Philo, by the earlier Stoics, by Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists, nor, indeed, anywhere out of the circle of Bible thought. It denotes the direct dependence of man upon God. The

[49] Judg. 8. 3; Gen. 26. 35; Hag. 1. 14; Job 15. 13; Eccl. 10. 4.
[50] H. W. Robinson, *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, p. 27.

peculiarly biblical idea is the attribution to man, as the highest in him, of that which is common to man with God. Spirit is the God-given principle of man's life, physical, mental, and spiritual." [51] The development of this thought had far-reaching consequences. It led to a new and far higher conception of human destiny. "Man had only to find along this line the fulfillment of the deepest moral and religious demands of his life, to be lifted into a realm where personality is victorious over death." [52]

In addition to "soul" and "spirit" the Hebrews used the word "heart" (*leb* or *lebab*) to designate the inner life of man. We also employ the same figure of speech. But with us the usage is more distinctly metaphorical than with the Hebrews. With them the blood was the actual seat of the soul, and the heart as the center of the blood-life or, as we should say, circulatory system was thought of as the direct organ of consciousness. It served somewhat the same function as the "brain" does with us; only the connection between the physical organ and the conscious life was more realistically conceived. It happens also that the word "brain" or "brains" with us comes nearer to suggesting the psychical import of the Hebrew *leb* or *lebab* than does our word "heart." Heart with us denotes the emotional side of life, and this was true to some extent also of Hebrew usage.[53] But it was chiefly intellectual and volitional activities that were referred by the Hebrews to the heart.[54] The emotional life was

[51] Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iv, p. 167.

[52] H. W. Robinson, *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, p. 83.

[53] Gen. 42. 28, J; Judg. 18. 20; 1 Sam. 4. 13; 25. 36; 2 Sam. 14. 1.

[54] Exod. 7. 23, E; 28. 3, P; Deut. 7. 17; 4. 9; 1 Sam. 2. 35; 1 Kings 3. 9; Hos. 7. 11.

thought of more particularly as having its seat in the *nephesh*.[55] "With all thy heart, and with all thy soul," [56] meant, then, "with all one's mental powers." No special significance, however, attaches to this difference of connotation in the case of the two terms. "Heart" and "soul" are often used synonymously with each other and with "spirit" to denote the total conscious life of man.

In our discussion thus far we have arrived at several conclusions that have a bearing on the relation of Old Testament teaching to the spirituality of man. We have seen that the Old Testament conception of man is anti-materialistic in the sense that it does not reduce human life to a purely physical basis. It does not regard man as the outcome of a collocation of merely material elements. There is in human nature a higher spiritual factor, a soul. In this regard, it is true, the Old Testament simply reflects a widely spread popular belief. But this belief is significant. "The word 'soul,' occurring in all cultivated languages, and the content of the word, indicates a general belief that the soul is not a passing phase of matter but an abiding essence. In its spontaneous language the race has recorded its verdict against materialism; and this fact constitutes a strong presumption in favor of the spiritual philosophy." [57] To this statement it may be objected that the Hebrews did not regard the soul as "an abiding essence;" it vanished with the body. And this is no doubt true. But the point to be noted is that the soul or spirit, as conceived by the Hebrews, was sufficiently distinct from its material basis, so that it was possible for it to

[55] Gen. 44. 30; 27. 4, J; Psa. 11. 5.
[56] Deut. 6. 5.
[57] Borden P. Bowne, *Studies in Theism*, pp. 377f.

become the organizing principle of a new life after death, when once the demand for such a life arose. The popular philosophy of the Old Testament was not materialistic. It left the door open to a spiritual view both of human nature and of human destiny.

On the other hand, the Old Testament view of man was not dualistic. It did not oppose the soul to the body in such a way as to make the two mutually independent, nor in such a way as to degrade the body. The soul was not looked upon as imprisoned in the body, nor was any merit attached to the mortification of the flesh. Life as a whole was viewed as a unit. This is the fundamental thought of the Old Testament. The flesh, on the one hand, and the soul, spirit or heart, on the other, were simply aspects of the one personal life. No basis was consequently furnished for a one-sided and unhealthy spiritualization of life, for a neglect of the needs of the body. The natural was not set in antithesis to the spiritual, but on the contrary was, rather, regarded as the true field for its exercise.

A third point we have noted is the accessibility of the human to the divine spirit. The use of the word *ruach* to designate the inner life of man accentuated this idea. The fact that the same word was used for the human as for the divine spirit emphasized their affinity. And this conception, as we have seen, was one of special significance. It implied the unique dignity of man and prepared the way for the later Jewish and Christian belief that man is destined to share in the eternal life of God.

A further word relative to Old Testament teaching concerning the dignity of human nature needs in this connection to be added. As over against God man is regularly in the Old Testament represented as a weak creature

of the dust.[58] "Cease ye from man," we read, "whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" [59] Man's relation to God is such that there is no place for human pride. God will tolerate no haughtiness of spirit on the part of men. "The lofty looks of man shall be brought low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted." [60] But this attitude of humility and consciousness of weakness as over against God were not inconsistent with a high conception of human nature as contrasted with the animal world. Men and animals, it is true, are frequently classed together under the general term "flesh," and the words "soul" and "spirit" are used of animals as well as men. But a unique dignity and glory was nevertheless assigned to man, "which raises him not merely comparatively but absolutely out of the ranks of the animals" (Schultz). This is clear from the two accounts of man's creation. In J[61] both the body and soul of man are the result of a special creative act on the part of God. The animals are created for him, and both the animal and vegetable kingdoms are made subject to him. In what is said of the creation of woman the unique superiority of man is brought out in a naïve but beautiful and impressive way. Woman, we are told, was created because no help *meet* for man could be found among the animals. In P also man owes his origin to a special purpose and act of God.[62] He is here even more clearly than in J the end and crown of creation. This is true both of male and female. If

[58] Gen. 18. 27, J; Isa. 40. 6-7; Job 13. 25; Psa. 78. 39; 104. 29.
[59] Isa. 2. 22.
[60] Isa. 2. 11; compare Gen. 3. 22; 11. 1-9.
[61] Gen. 2. 7ff.
[62] Gen. 1.

there is a trace of inequality in the conception of man and woman in J, this is lacking in P. And if there is also in J a feeling that man did not and should not resemble God,[63] this likewise is lacking in P. Man is here represented as made in the "image of God."

What, however, was meant by the image of God is a question concerning which there has been considerable difference of opinion. The older view was that it referred to the moral perfection of man before the fall. But this is inconsistent with Gen. 9. 6, which speaks of mankind generally after the Deluge as made in the image of God. Another view is that man's likeness to God consisted simply in his bodily form. And this may have been the original meaning of the term, but it certainly was not all that P understood by it. Others find the divine image in man's lordship over nature. This thought is suggested by the context in Genesis 1 and by Psalm 8. But lordship, as Skinner says, "is the consequence, not the essence, of the divine image." We must, then, find the image of God in man's participation in the higher personal or spiritual life of God. The physical need not altogether be excluded, but the stress is to be placed upon the spiritual. This is manifestly the idea in Psalm 8, where we read that man was made "but little lower than God [*Elohim*]." *Elohim* here probably does not mean God, but the general class of divine or spiritual beings. Man, though a fleshly being, it is here said, stands next to the pure spirits. There is only a small gap between him and them. The deepest instincts of his nature link him to the spirit-world. He is made for God. This thought is suggested in a striking way by the prophet Jeremiah. "The stork," he says, "in the heavens knoweth her ap-

[63] Gen. 3. 22.

pointed times; and the turtle-dove and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the law of Jehovah." [64] It is implied in this verse that what instinct is to the birds of passage, that the spiritual impulse is or ought to be in man. But for his willfulness it would lead him unerringly to God. In his essential nature man is spiritual, and hence must find in God his chief good. As the psalmist says,

> "Whom have I in heaven *but thee?*
> And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." [65]

There was, we thus see, a tendency in the Old Testament toward a distinctly spiritual view of man. In spite of a popular and inadequate psychology there was a growing and deepening conception of man's essential affinity with God.

We now pass to the question of human freedom. An adequate discussion of this subject would require a consideration of the problem of individualism in the Old Testament, the relation of individual to what has been called "corporate" personality. But this is so broad and so important a topic that its discussion has been reserved for a separate chapter. Here we shall consider the teaching of the Old Testament only in so far as it relates to the general problem of human freedom.

Freedom is nowhere asserted in the Old Testament, and it is nowhere denied. The philosophic question of determinism and indeterminism did not exist for the ancient Hebrew mind. The Old Testament attitude

[64] 8. 7.
[65] 73. 25.

toward the subject was purely practical. The demand of the ethical nature for freedom was fully recognized, but so also was the demand of the religious nature for the exercise of divine control in human life. The result is that we have two sets of facts in the Old Testament, one apparently favoring determinism and the other freedom. The relation, for example, of God to man is in several instances represented under the figure of the potter and the clay,[66] and in every case but one[67] this figure is understood in a strictly deterministic sense. God is also spoken of as a doer of evil. Moral evil as well as natural evil is attributed to him as its inciting cause.[68] In particular it is said of him that he hardened the hearts of men. This expression occurs especially in the case of Pharaoh,[69] but it was not confined to him. It is used frequently of others in the Old Testament.[70] Efforts have been made to harmonize such statements as these with the fact of human freedom, but the explanations offered have usually been forced and unnatural. All that can be said is that the Hebrews themselves saw no contradiction between divine causality on the one hand and human freedom on the other. The two were simply opposite sides of the same fact. While, for instance, it is said of Pharaoh that God hardened his heart, it is also said of him that he hardened his own heart,[71] and the same expression is also used of others.[72]

So far as human freedom is concerned, it is every-

[66] Isa. 45. 9; 64. 8; 29. 16.
[67] Jer. 18. 1ff.
[68] Judg. 9. 23; 2 Sam. 24. 1, 10; Isa. 45. 7; Amos 3. 6.
[69] Exod. 4. 21, E; 7. 3; 9. 12, P; 10. 20, 27, E.
[70] Jos. 11. 20; Deut. 2. 30; Isa. 63. 17, etc.
[71] Exod. 8. 15, 32; 9. 34, J.
[72] 1 Sam. 6. 6; 2 Chron. 36. 13; Psa. 95. 8.

where assumed in the Old Testament. It is not said that man is free; the more concrete expression is used, that man "chooses." But the idea is the same. Man is everywhere treated as morally responsible. His free will does not lie beyond the influence of the divine will, but it is a fact nevertheless quite as much as the divine influence itself. Had the Hebrew felt it necessary to choose between human freedom, on the one hand, and the divine sovereignty, on the other, it is possible that his choice might have fallen on the latter. But no such necessity presented itself to his mind. The freedom and responsibility of man stood as a fixed fact in his thought, and in so far as this was the case the ethical interests of religion were adequately safeguarded.

CHAPTER XI

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

One's conception of sin is in large part a reflection both of one's conception of God and one's conception of man. If God is regarded as essentially ethical in nature, and man as essentially a spiritual being, there will naturally be a tendency to identify sin with moral evil and to discard the earlier superstitious and ceremonial associations of the term. If at the same time there is a vivid sense of the divine presence in the world and a clear recognition of human freedom and responsibility, there will also inevitably be a tendency to take a serious view of sin and to look upon it as a fact of central importance in human life. It is consequently only what we should expect when we find both of these tendencies in the Old Testament. They grew naturally out of its conceptions of God and man. They are also the points of chief interest in connection with the doctrine of sin. Hence it is to them that our attention in this chapter will for the most part be directed.

The Ethicizing of the Conception of Sin

We begin with the moralization of the idea of sin. At first sin was looked upon as simply an offense against the Deity. This offense, in so far as it was voluntary, no doubt involved an ethical element. But according to ancient conceptions, an act did not need to be voluntary in order to be an offense to the Deity. An ignorant or careless violation of a divine law was punished as well as one that was deliberate. Then, too, the divine law was

supposed to require the performance of many acts that would not to-day be classed as distinctly ethical. Religious rites and social customs were looked upon as obligatory. Not to observe them was to expose oneself to the divine wrath. On the other hand, wrongs done to one's neighbor were not necessarily offenses against God. An act might be evil and yet not a sin.

All of these imperfectly moralized conceptions of sin are to be found in the early history of Israel. Jonathan, who knew nothing of his father's curse, ate of the forbidden honey, and thus exposed himself to the penalty of death.[1] Uzzah out of solicitude for the ark put forth his hand to keep it from falling and was smitten dead "for his error." [2] Pharaoh was plagued for taking Sarah to his house, though he did not know that she was the wife of Abraham,[3] and Abimelech only escaped "sinning" in a similar case by a divine revelation of Sarah's relationship to Abraham.[4] Personal guilt was thus not necessary to the idea of sin. Nor was it necessary that a sin be a violation of what we would call a principle of right. The curse pronounced by Saul on anyone who should eat food before evening had no rational claim to be heeded, and yet not to heed it was regarded as a sin punishable by death.[5] Eating flesh with the blood violated no ethical principle, yet it was looked upon as a sin against Yahweh.[6] And so with religious rites in general. It was quite as much a sin to disregard them as to disregard the plain dictates of the moral law. Then, too, the moral law itself was identi-

[1] 1 Sam. 14. 27, 43-44.
[2] 2 Sam. 6. 6f.; compare 1 Sam. 6. 19ff.
[3] Gen. 12. 15, 17, J.
[4] Gen. 20. 3, 6, 9, E.
[5] 1 Sam. 14. 24ff.
[6] 1 Sam. 14. 32ff.

fied so closely with custom that the two were virtually indistinguishable. To say that "it is not so done in Israel" was equivalent to branding an act as immoral.[7] It was for this reason that the census taken by David was condemned;[8] it was a breach of custom. This was also the evil of which Nabal was guilty; he refused to pay the customary levy asked of him by David and his band.[9]

To accept in this thoroughgoing way custom as the standard of right naturally led to externalism in the moral life. Morality was looked upon simply as compliance with established customs. And this not only eliminated the subjective element from morals, not only reduced sin to what has been termed "forensic liability," it restricted the field of objective morals. It permitted new evils to grow up without a distinct recognition of their unethical or at least their sinful character. That this was to a large extent true of the Hebrews in the eighth century B. C., is evident from the prophetic writings of that day. Many of the people, especially the leaders, were assiduous in the performance of religious rites, and faithful in the observance of national customs; but when it came to social injustice, to oppression of the poor, and to vices such as luxury and licentiousness, they seemed to think that these lay beyond the province of religion. There was nothing in them that need give offense to the Deity. There was in them "no iniquity that is sin." [10] In this connection it may also be noted that moral obligation in early Israel was largely limited to one's own people. Falsehood and

[7] 2 Sam. 13. 12; Judg. 19. 30; compare Gen. 20. 9; 34. 7.

[8] 2 Sam. 24. 1, 17.

[9] 1 Sam. 25. 39.

[10] Hos. 12. 8. The text of this verse should, however, probably be emended so as to read, "All his gains will not suffice for the iniquity which he has committed."

deceit were practiced against foreigners without rebuke by Abraham,[11] Jacob,[12] and David.[13] Against his enemies the ancient Israelite was cruel and vindictive,[14] and that too in the service of religion.[15] But this was due not so much to lack of conscience as to the strong racial prejudices that divided the nations and tribes of antiquity. The sense of moral obligation is limited by imagination and sympathy, and where these are undeveloped as a result of ignorance or strife, men have no consciousness of duty beyond the particular tribe or nation to which they belong.

From the foregoing facts it is clear that the early Israelitic conception of sin was in several respects defective. But it would be a mistake to regard these facts as representative of the total thought of the early Israelites. There are clear indications that a higher view was also current among them. While the subjective or voluntary element in conduct did not receive proper recognition, it was by no means completely overlooked. The code of the covenant distinguishes between murder and manslaughter, and protects a man guilty of the latter from the law of blood revenge.[16] David, when the people were smitten because of the census which he had ordered to be taken, said to Yahweh, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely; but these sheep, what have they done? let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house." [17] The Decalogue condemns sin in thought as

[11] Gen. 12. 10ff., J; 20. 2ff., E.
[12] Gen. 27. 5ff.; 31. 1ff., JE.
[13] 1 Sam. 27. 10ff.; 29. 8ff.
[14] Gen. 34. 25ff., JE; 1 Sam. 27. 8f.; 2 Sam. 8. 2.
[15] 1 Sam. 15.
[16] Exod. 21. 12-14.
[17] 2 Sam. 24. 17.

well as in word and deed.[18] And in J's account of the Flood it is said of man that "every imagination," or "the whole bent, of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." [19]

Along with this recognition of the subjective element in morals there went also an increasing tendency to look upon all violations of the moral law as offenses against God as well as man. Yahweh is represented as a Judge whose function it was to decide against the guilty individual[20] and also against the guilty nation.[21] From the earliest times he was thought of as sustaining an especially close relationship to the administration of justice.[22] "The judgment," we read, "is God's." [23] This view is well illustrated by the Code of the Covenant, where the various legal and moral relations of men are represented as under the divine protection.[24] It is also strikingly exemplified by the sin of David against Uriah the Hittite[25] and by the judicial murder of Naboth.[26] These wrongs done by kings to individual subjects were sternly condemned by the prophets Nathan and Elijah as sins against God.

It is not, however, until we come to the literary prophets that we find a complete moralization of the idea of sin. This moralization manifests itself in several different ways. In the first place, the prophets virtually

[18] Exod. 20. 17.
[19] Gen. 6. 5.
[20] 1 Sam. 2. 25.
[21] Judg. 11. 27.
[22] Exod. 18. 13ff., E.
[23] Deut. 1. 17.
[24] Exod. 21-23.
[25] 2 Sam. 12. 7ff.
[26] 1 Kings 21.

eliminated violations of the ceremonial law from the category of sins. At least they made rites and ceremonies so subordinate an element in religion that they ceased to be factors of any consequence in the conception of human duty. What God, according to the prophets, required of men was not sacrifices and burnt-offerings, but obedience to the moral law.[27] Outward acts of worship when offered as a substitute for righteousness were simply an abomination in his sight.[28] They were an aggravation of sin rather than a ground for its remission.[29] In the next place, the prophets made prominent the idea that wrongs done to one's neighbor are sins against God. Indeed, it was such transgressions that they especially condemned. It was the social injustice, the oppression of the poor, the bribery, deceit, and luxury in Israel and Judah, that they singled out as the direct causes of the national doom which they predicted. These evils were not only violations of law or violations of custom, they were offenses against Yahweh himself, acts of rebellion against him. He had in earlier times been regarded as in a special sense the defender of law and custom. But now he has risen to a higher plane; he is the champion of right, of humanity, a principle that rises far above mere law and custom. Moral evil of every kind is now an offense in his sight, a sin against him.

Then, too, moral evil, as the prophets conceived it, was subjective as well as objective. To some extent this was recognized in the preprophetic period. But not until we come to the literary prophets was the subjective factor made primary. And among the literary prophets it was

[27] Hos. 6. 6.

[28] Amos. 5. 21-24; Isa. 1. 10-17.

[29] Hos. 8. 11.

Jeremiah who first emphasized it. He, it has been said, "first discovered the soul and its significance for religion." Hosea had represented sin as a habit,[30] as something so deeply ingrained that its removal was like the breaking up of fallow ground.[31] Isaiah had condemned all worship that did not come from the heart, all mere ceremonialism, whether it took the form of prayers or of sacrifices;[32] and this was also the attitude of the other eighth-century prophets. But in Jeremiah the subjective element in morals and religion was brought into the foreground in a way that had not been done before. God, according to Jeremiah, was one who tried the heart and the mind.[33] He stood in a direct relation to the soul. The soul was the seat of moral values. Good and evil alike had their source in it. It was the stubbornness of the heart that was the root of sin.[34] This stubbornness was not inborn, but through habit it had become so strong as to be a kind of second nature to man which he could no more change than an Ethiopian his skin or a leopard his spots.[35] And yet a change was necessary if the people of Judah were to escape the divine wrath. So Jeremiah takes up the words of Hosea and expands them, saying: "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah, and take away the foreskins of your heart." [36] Only a radical change of character would remove from their lives the evil that was threatening their ruin.

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[30] 5. 4.
[31] 10. 12.
[32] 29. 13; 1. 10-17.
[33] 11. 20; 17. 10; 20. 12.
[34] 7. 24; 9. 14; 23. 17.
[35] 13. 23.
[36] 4. 3-4.

In the more subjective and distinctly ethical conception of sin thus introduced there was, it should be noted, no tendency to reduce sin to offenses against one's fellow men. Such offenses were sins against God, far more so than any neglect of religious rites. But along with these offenses there were others of a distinctly religious character, offenses that were directed chiefly if not solely against Yahweh. There was, for instance, the worship of other gods, the worship of idols, man-made images.[37] Such worship may have had its evil social consequences, but it was not on that account that the prophets condemned it. They saw in it a direct act of disloyalty to Yahweh, an act of rebellion against him. It was so also with the foreign intriguing, the establishment of alliances with Assyria and Egypt, condemned by the prophets.[38] Such alliances may have threatened in various ways the social life of the people. But this was not the reason for the prophetic opposition to them. What the prophets saw in them was a renunciation of faith in Yahweh, a lack of trust in his protecting power. It was for a similar reason also that Hosea condemned the anarchy of his day, the setting up of kings one after the other without the authorization of Yahweh.[39] Such acts were an expression of unbelief, of distrust in the divine guidance. And so in the prophetic literature as a whole the fundamental element in evil of every kind was always disobedience to or disregard of God. The disobedience or disregard took different forms with the different prophets. Amos saw it chiefly in the social injustice of his day, Hosea in disloyalty or unfaithfulness to Yahweh, Isaiah in unbelief,

[37] Hos. 8. 4-6; Isa. 44. 9-20.
[38] Hos. 7. 11-13.
[39] 8. 4; 7. 7; 13. 11.

Jeremiah in stubbornness of heart, and Deutero-Isaiah in lack of faith and courage. But under whatever form the chief sin of Israel was conceived, its essential nature remained the same. It was looked upon as directed primarily against God rather than man.

In the postexilic period we have a continuation of the prophetic teaching concerning sin, but along with it there were two tendencies less profound and less distinctly ethical in character. These two tendencies were represented by the priests on the one hand and the wise men on the other. The priestly teaching was a revival of the ceremonialism of the preprophetic period, but with a difference. The rites and ceremonies condemned by Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah were essentially heathen in character. They were associated with sensuous and degrading views of God, and were furthermore looked upon as substitutes for righteous living. This was no longer the case in the postexilic period. The lofty prophetic conception of God was then generally accepted, and so also was the prophetic program for human life. What the priests, indeed, aimed to do was to translate that program into terms so concrete that all could understand it. This was true of the authors both of Deuteronomy and the Priestly Code. These men sought by rules and rites and laws to reduce the prophetic teaching to a form that would be intelligible to all, and that might consequently be made the basis of an efficient national or ecclesiastical organization. The average man was not as yet prepared for the lofty spiritual truths laid down by the prophets. He was too much accustomed to sacrifices and sacred feasts to give them up altogether. He needed the outward rites that had been taught him; he

needed also specific regulations for his daily life. Hence it was that the priests detached the earlier sacred institutions, such as the Sabbath and sacred feasts, from their heathen associations,[40] and sought to make them symbols of higher religious truth. Hence it was that they laid down specific rules for daily conduct.

In carrying out this program they placed, it is true, the ceremonial requirements alongside of the ethical, and left them both apparently on the same level. Indeed, they seem to have devoted more attention to the ceremonial than the ethical. But they still did not lose sight of the essentially ethical character of the teaching they had inherited. The Decalogue with its moral demands remained for them the fundamental law of the land. Then, too, the ceremonial as such was not simply a symbol of higher religious truth. It was an expression of refined religious taste. It carried with it the idea that we owe God not only the obedience due a righteous Judge, but also that personal consideration, that feeling of reverence and awe, due the Lord of the universe.[41]

But in spite of these spiritual elements in the later ceremonialism it was inevitable that the stress placed by the priests on ritual offenses should give rise to more or less of externalism in the conception of sin. It is difficult for people to keep steadily in view the symbolic and spiritual significance of a ritual. The mind easily loses itself in the outward form, and thus an offense against the ritual tends to become a mere violation of an external rule. It ceases to be a matter of conscience. Lord Melbourne, it is re-

[40] The Sabbath was probably derived from the Babylonians, and the three great annual feasts, that of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, from the Canaanites.

[41] See pp. 150f.

lated, once protested against a sermon on personal sin by rising from his seat and stalking down the aisle, muttering to himself that things had come to a pretty pass when religion was made to invade a man's private life. And this is the attitude of mind which a ceremonial type of religion is likely to create. It makes of sin something impersonal and objective. It may take sin seriously. This was true in a marked degree of postexilic Judaism. The whole levitical system centered about the fact of sin and its removal. But sin was nevertheless conceived to a large extent in an external way, in a way that involved no vital grip on conscience.

This is reflected in the distinction made in the priestly law between two classes of sins, sins committed "with a high hand," [42] and sins committed "unwittingly." [43] This distinction did not correspond fully with our distinction between intentional and unintentional nor with our distinction between moral and ceremonial. "Unwitting" sins might be intentional and might be violations of the moral law. But usually they were ceremonial offenses, and were committed without a full consciousness of their sinful character. Indeed, the latter was their characteristic feature. Unwitting sins, while not necessarily unintentional, were not deliberate and conscious acts of rebellion against God and did not involve a breach of the covenant. They might consequently be atoned for by sacrifice.[44] It was this class of sins about which the whole levitical system revolved. And sin in this sense was manifestly not sin in the full ethical sense of the term. There was something objective and mystical, if not arti-

[42] Num. 15. 30.
[43] Lev. 4. 2, 22, 27; 5. 18.
[44] Num. 15. 22-31.

ficial, about it. It did not relate itself in an adequate way to intention and to conscience.

Another postexilic deviation from the prophetic conception of sin is found in what has been termed the "utilitarianism" of the book of Proverbs. Here sin is represented as folly; wickedness is lack of understanding. The true guide of life is to be found in wisdom.

> "Length of days is in her right hand;
> In her left hand are riches and honor." [45]

Prudence and righteousness thus go hand in hand. Men are exhorted to be righteous, because they will in this way secure the good things of life, and they are urged to avoid evil because such a course will lead to suffering and ruin.[46] If men only knew the inevitable results of wickedness, they would shun it. The essence of sin is ignorance, ignorance of the law of retribution.

A certain basis for this view is no doubt to be found in the teaching of the prophets. They too pointed out the disastrous consequences of sin, and condemned the people because of their blindness to the doom they were bringing upon themselves. But, as they viewed it, the trouble with the people was not simply lack of knowledge. There was a radical defect in their heart life. Will and conscience were impaired. And this in the eyes of the prophets was the serious thing. Not the doom resulting from wickedness but the wickedness itself was what they were primarily concerned about. They were ethical monists. To them the ideal was the real. The moral law was the dominant force in the universe. Its imperative was absolute. Obedience to it was the chief good of life.

[45] Prov. 3. 16.

[46] 2. 21-22; 3. 1-2; 10. 27; 11. 18, 31; 16. 20.

This does not mean that the prophets regarded moral obedience as its own sufficient reward. They were far removed from such hollow abstractions. Beneficent results for the total life, they held, would follow from obedience, but the primary and vital thing was the obedience, not the results. The prophets were thus intuitionalists rather than utilitarians.

The reverse was the case with the wise men. They laid stress on the effects of obedience and disobedience rather than on the obedience or disobedience itself. The result was that their sense of sin lacked the inwardness and depth of that found in the prophets. Outward experiences became with them more important than the inner state of the soul; and hence there was a tendency to judge the latter by the former. This necessarily gave rise to moral confusion, and to superficiality and externalism of ethical judgment. It also led inevitably to a weakening of the moral imperative. For outward fortune can never furnish an adequate basis for the moral law. Morality of a high type is always rooted in idealism.

The true prophetic conception of sin is best represented in the postexilic period by some of the psalms and by the book of Job. There is in some of the psalms the same depreciation of sacrifices and outward rites that appears in the early Prophets. We read for instance:

"Thou delightest not in sacrifices; else would I give it:
Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." [47]

There is also in some of the psalms the same stress on

[47] Psa. 51. 16, 17; compare 40. 6-8; 69. 30f.

righteousness as the one essential of true worship that we find in the Prophets. It is

"He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,
And speaketh truth in his heart;
He that slandereth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil
to his friend;
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor,—" [48]

it is he, and he only, that is to dwell in Yahweh's holy hill. Offenses against one's neighbor, it is here implied, are the chief offenses against God. And what, on the other hand, gave to a moral offense its seriousness was just the fact that it was primarily an offense against God.

"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
And done that which is evil in thy sight." [49]

Such was the feeling of the devout psalmist as he contemplated his own sinfulness. There is too in the Psalms a marked inwardness of ethical life and thought. Clean hands are not enough; the heart must also be pure.[50] God desires "truth in the inward parts"; and so the psalmist prays,[51]

"Create in me a clean heart, O God;
And renew a right spirit within me." [52]

The same inwardness appears also in the book of Job. Sin is here represented as rooted deep in human nature,[53]

[48] 15. 1f.; compare 24. 3-5; 50. 16ff.; 66. 18f.
[49] 51. 4.
[50] 24. 4.
[51] 51. 6.
[52] Psa. 51. 10.
[53] 4. 17; 14. 4; 15. 14f.

and as manifesting itself quite as much in thoughts and desires as in outward acts.[54] Indeed, the book of Job hardly falls short of the New Testament itself in its penetrating insight into the inner sources of moral evil and into its power over human life.

Looking back over our discussion thus far, we see that sin, as understood by the early Hebrews, stood in antithesis both to holiness and to righteousness, and that this double antithesis was never completely overcome by the Old Testament. The prophets reacted strongly against the ceremonial conception of sin, but the later priests re-established it as an essential part of the official religion. To violate the ceremonial laws that guarded the divine holiness was in postexilic Judaism a sin quite as much as the violation of the moral law. But in spite of this revival of ceremonialism the ethical teaching of the prophets persisted. The inwardness of sin was emphasized; and the way was thus prepared for such a complete rejection of ceremonial holiness as we find in the New Testament.[55] Taking, then, the Old Testament as a whole, it may be said that in spite of backward currents here and there its teaching is characterized by a gradual ethicizing of the conception of sin.

The Seriousness of Sin

We now pass to that other aspect of the doctrine of sin in which religion is especially interested, the question of its seriousness. There is in the Old Testament a growing appreciation of the gravity of sin. This is evident both in the life and thought of the people. It appears in the increasing prominence given to sin and guilt-offer-

[54] 31. 1-40.
[55] Mark 7. 8ff.

ings in the public worship, and in the greater somberness that characterized the religious life of the postexilic period. Various causes contributed to this development, but the most important was the exile. The national humiliation and suffering that followed from the fall of Jerusalem brought home to the people a consciousness of sin such as they had not had before. The book of Lamentations illustrates this, and so does the whole postexilic priestly system.

What we are chiefly interested in, however, is the doctrinal or intellectual expression of the seriousness with which the Hebrews viewed the subject of sin. And to ascertain this we must inquire into the teaching of the Old Testament relative to the nature, extent, and origin of sin. These are all important topics. We begin with the nature of sin.

There is in the Old Testament no speculation concerning the nature of sin. But from the Hebrew words used to designate sin or evil we may distinguish two different points of view from which it was conceived. First, it was represented as want of correspondence with an objective standard. This is implied in the common word for sin, *chattath,* and also in the word *awon,* usually rendered "iniquity." The root of *chattath,* like that of the corresponding Greek word *hamartia,* meant originally "to miss the mark," [56] and the root of *awon* meant "to go astray" or "make crooked." Sin was thus thought of as deviation from a prescribed course of conduct, as failure to do the right thing. But this leaves us with only a very general and on the whole external conception of sin.

The other view found in the Old Testament represents sin as rebellion. This is the idea expressed by the word

[56] Judg. 20. 16.

pesha, or *pasha,*[57] and also by such terms as *marad,*[58] *marah,*[59] and *tsarar.*[60] Of these words the first is used most frequently and is the most important. The special significance attaching to it is well brought out in Job 34. 37, where we read, "He addeth rebellion [*pesha*] unto his sin [*chattath*]." *Pesha* was more serious than *chattath.* It, as A. B. Davidson says, "describes sin as a personal, voluntary act. It also implies something rebelled against, something which is of the nature of a superior or an authority. . . . The particular authority is not stated; . . . but the emphasis is laid upon the self-determination of the person, and his consequent withdrawal from the authority. The word could not be used of the withdrawal of an equal from cooperation with another equal." [61] It might be used of the rebellion of a people against its king,[62] but most frequently it was used of rebellion against God.[63] And here it is that we have the inmost essence of sin. Sin is not simply moral evil; it is "moral evil regarded religiously." It is disobedience to God. This it is that gives to the biblical idea of sin its peculiar depth and gravity. Sin is a positive act or state of hostility to God. It is not an "unreality or illusion," as Spinoza would have us believe; nor is it, as Hegel teaches, "an essential moment in the progressive or eternally realized life of God"; nor is it, as some evolutionists tell us, simply a relic of the animal nature which we have inherited. Not even Kant's conception of evil as

[57] Isa. 43. 27.
[58] Num. 14. 9, J.
[59] Num. 20. 10, P.
[60] Isa. 65. 2.
[61] *The Theology of the Old Testament,* p. 210.
[62] 1 Kings 12. 19.
[63] Isa. 1. 2; Hos. 7. 13; Jer. 2. 8; Ezek. 2. 3; Isa. 43. 27.

"the perversion of the right relation between reason and sense, the false subordination of the rational to the sensuous" fills out the biblical idea of sin.[64] Sin, as it is conceived both in the Old and the New Testament, carries with it the thought of a defiant attitude of the soul toward God. And it is this aspect of sin that becomes increasingly prominent in the course of Israel's history. Indeed, sin is not confined to a hostile attitude of the human soul. It comes to be thought of as an objective power.[65] "The characteristic," as Toy says, "of the New Testament teaching is its intense conception of sin as the one great evil in the world, as the central fact of life, around which range themselves all the powers of heaven, earth and hell. All the manifestations of God in history look finally to the annihilation of this malignant power of the human soul." [66]

In the seriousness with which the Bible thus takes the subject of sin some see a significant point of contrast between the ancient and the modern mind. "As a matter of fact," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "the higher man of to-day is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment." [67] And Professor Royce offers as a partial definition of the modern man the statement that he "is one who does not believe in hell, and who is too busy to think about his sins." [68] These statements probably represent correctly the tendency of thought in non-theological circles at present, and it is no doubt also true that the distinctively religious mind does not to-day dwell

[64] See F. R. Tennant, *The Origin and Propagation of Sin*, pp. 51, 67.

[65] Gen. 4. 7, J; Psa. 36. 1; 1 Chron. 21. 1.

[66] *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 220.

[67] Quoted in W. E. Orchard's *Modern Theories of Sin*, p. 11.

[68] *The Problem of Christianity*, vol. i, p. 176.

on the subject of sin so much as was once the case. But this is not so significant a fact as is sometimes supposed. It is simply a result of the changed mood of the time. In ancient Judaism there was a sense of world-weariness. The nation had been defeated in its political aims. Self-assertion, it was now felt, could yield but little. If the hopes of the devout Israelite were to be realized, it could be only by a marvelous divine intervention. The thing to do, consequently, was not to devote oneself to a positive program of social amelioration, but to remove the obstacles to the coming of the kingdom of God. The ethical life thus took a negative turn. It found its satisfaction in repentance from sin rather than in achievement and self-realization. With us to-day the reverse is the case. We have met no crushing defeat. We believe God is working through us for the establishment of his kingdom. What consequently interests us is the positive program in which we are engaged. Not what we omit doing or repent of doing, but what we do, is the thing that concerns us. The satisfaction of service has thus to no small degree taken the place of the consciousness of sin. But both, it should be noted, involve the same ethical earnestness. They grow out of different moods, and each finds its completion in the other. Logically, however, the modern emphasis is no doubt nearer the truth, for, as Bowne says, "the religious life in its idea is altogether independent of the existence of sin. We are not, then, to think of it as a device for overcoming sin or for saving sinners. This work, indeed, has to be done; but it is only incidental to the deeper, more inclusive aim of religion. Religion has to do with the relation of man to God, and would exist if there were no sin in the world or in the heart. Indeed, it is only in the sinless life that

the ideal of religion can be perfectly realized; for only there can we find the filial spirit perfectly realized and perfectly expressed." [69]

As the Old Testament takes a serious view of the nature of sin, so it takes an equally serious view of its extent. There are a number of passages that teach either directly or by implication that sin is universal.

> "Who can say, I have made my heart clean,
> I am pure from my sin?" [70]

"There is none that doeth good, no, not one." [71] "There is no man that sinneth not." [72] "There is not a righteous man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." [73] In addition to such specific utterances as these it is also evident that the total representation of human life and history in the Old Testament implies the virtual universality of sin. So far as Israel is concerned, her history from the beginning was a succession of sins and apostasies. This is the teaching both of the prophets and the historical books. And as for the heathen it is everywhere assumed that a lower type of life was expected, if not characteristic, of them. Indeed, the whole philosophy of history that we find in the Old Testament revolves about the thought that the misfortunes and reverses of human life from the time of Adam down were due to sin. Sin, it is implied, is a universal fact of human experience.

Over against these facts, however, there are others in

[69] *Studies in Christianity*, p. 266.

[70] Prov. 20. 9.

[71] Psa. 14. 3; 53. 3.

[72] 1 Kings 8. 46; 2 Chron. 6. 36.

[73] Eccl. 7. 20; compare Psa. 143. 2; Job 4. 17-19; 14. 4; 15. 14; Gen. 8. 21.

the Old Testament that seem to imply that human sinfulness is not absolutely universal, that there are exceptions to the general rule. We have, for instance, the cases of Enoch, Noah, and Job. Enoch, it is said, "walked with God." [74] Noah is spoken of as "a righteous man and perfect in his generations." [75] Job is declared to have been "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and turned away from evil." [76] It may also be added that Abraham and Joseph are not apparently charged with faults by the sacred writers, and that some of the psalmists speak of their own righteousness in a way that seems to imply that they regarded themselves as guiltless of wrongdoing.[77]

Now, in such instances it is quite possible that we have what were supposed to be actual exceptions to the general rule of human sinfulness. The absolute universality of sin was not a dogma, at least in early Israel. Human nature in and of itself was not regarded as so depraved as necessarily to exclude the possibility of a sinless life. Such a life may well have been thought of as within the reach of exceptional men. Not until the time of Jeremiah and the exile, according to some scholars,[78] did the idea of the strict universality of sin receive expression, and after that it was only slowly that it gained general acceptance. It is to this late period that the specific statements above quoted concerning the sinfulness of all men are to be referred.

But while it is thus possible that the Old Testament at-

[74] Gen. 5. 24, P.

[75] Gen. 6. 9, P; 7. 1, J.

[76] Job 1. 1, 8; 2. 3.

[77] 7. 8; 18. 20ff.

[78] See Stade, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments*, p. 257, and Friedrich Schwally, *Leben nach dem Tode*, p. 99.

tributed sinlessness to certain exceptional men, it is more probable that the righteousness ascribed to them was relative rather than absolute. As compared with other men Enoch, Noah, and Job were righteous and perfect, but this does not mean that they were altogether free from moral imperfections. Job, for instance, admits his own sinfulness.[79] There is no man, he says, that is perfectly clean.[80] In a similar way Moses and David are represented as righteous in a preeminent degree,[81] and yet serious faults are attributed to them. So also Isaiah, the chief of the prophets, confesses that he is a man of unclean lips.[82] It is, then, probable that the Old Testament writers did not mean to ascribe absolute sinlessness to any human being, not even to Enoch and Noah. The general sinfulness of man is an idea with which the Hebrew mind was deeply impressed.[83] Even the pre-prophetic Israelite, as Köberle says, "would have regarded it as impious arrogance to doubt that all men in the sight of God are sinners."[84] And later this conviction was naturally deepened by the growing inwardness of the ethical life and by the greater degree of transcendence ascribed to God, until finally it became a fixed article of belief.

It is the universality of sin that makes the problem of its origin so difficult. Sin in the ethical sense of the term implies guilt, and guilt involves freedom and responsibility. But if men are really free, why do they all

[79] 7. 21; 10. 14; 13. 26.
[80] 14. 4.
[81] Num. 12. 6-8, E; 1 Sam. 13. 14.
[82] Isa. 6. 5.
[83] Gen. 6. 5; 8. 21.
[84] *Sünde und Gnade*, p. 59.

sin? To account for this fact it would seem necessary to assume that there is in human nature an extravolitional factor that determines the will. But if so, sin owes its ultimate source to necessity, not freedom, and thus its ethical character is denied. This antinomy between the race-wide prevalence of sin and the idea of guilt which seems essential to the concept of sin has figured prominently in the history of harmartiology. Numerous attempts have been made to solve it. Of these the most important one historically is the theory that the universality of sin is due to the fall of Adam and the resulting corruption of human nature. According to this theory, every individual inherits a sinful nature. Though not himself responsible for it, he is nevertheless adjudged guilty because of it. In some mysterious way the guilt of Adam is transmitted to all his descendants.[85] This transmitted guilt is known as original sin by way of distinction from the actual sins of which the individual is guilty. Sin is thus unescapable and necessary so far as the individual is concerned, and yet it carries with it the idea of guilt.

To what extent if any, the question now arises, does this theory find a basis in the Old Testament? It was once believed that an adequate ground for it was to be found in Genesis 3. But modern exegesis has pretty thoroughly dispelled this belief. It is now generally admitted that Adam and Eve are not represented as originally morally perfect beings, that their disobedience was not regarded as resulting in the corruption of human nature, and that nowhere in the Old Testament is anything said about the transmission of Adam's guilt to his

[85] For a clear and compact exposition and criticism of the different theories that have sought to explain this transmission, see H. C. Sheldon's *System of Christian Doctrine,* pp. 317-322.

descendants. What we have in Genesis 3 is simply an account of man's first sin and its physical consequences. That the author took a serious view of the first sin is evident from the consequences attributed to it: the pains of childbirth, toilsome labor, and the loss of immortal life. But so far as the source of sin is concerned, the situation with Adam and Eve was not essentially different from what the Old Testament represents it to be in the case of people generally. Our first parents were free to refuse the evil and choose the good. And so it is with us all. Each one of us, as 2 Baruch says, is "the Adam of his own soul." [86] Sin crouched at the door of Cain,[87] as it does at ours, and as it did with our innocent first parents. But in each case it was assumed that the tempted person was free to resist the evil and master it. The free will of man was thus thought of as the source of sin. This was true of later generations as well as of the first human pair. The "fall" did not impair human freedom, nor did it impair that image of God in which the first man was made.[88]

But while the Old Testament knows nothing of original sin in the sense of guilt transmitted from Adam, it is well aware of a native human bias toward evil. This bias has its seat in the flesh. The flesh itself, as we have seen, is not sinful. But its impulses, its desires, its willfulness constitute the soil of sin. It is here that temptation takes root. We see this in the case of the first human pair. It was the woman's self-assertion and desire of pleasure that led to the first act of disobedience. The divine prohibition seemed to her an unfriendly restriction,

[86] 54. 19.
[87] Gen. 4. 7.
[88] Gen. 1. 26; 9. 6, P.

and when faith in the divine goodness and reverence for the divine command had thus been weakened, the allurement of the senses easily swayed the will. So it is also with people in general. Their fleshly nature, with its assertiveness and love of pleasure, leads readily to unbelief and disobedience.

This fact, however, does not from the Old Testament point of view increase the sense of guilt. Rather does it constitute a ground for clemency. Man is so frail, yields so easily to temptation, that God ought not to hold him to the strictest account. His very weakness ought to be an appeal to the divine mercy. This thought is repeatedly expressed in the Old Testament,[89] and from one point of view Piepenbring is quite right in saying that it "is unquestionably much more correct than the orthodox doctrine of native and hereditary guilt." [90] The physical and moral weakness of man does lessen the degree of individual responsibility. But, on the other hand, it is also true, as Bowne says, that "we judge not merely the will but also the sensibilities, not merely the action but also the tendencies and spontaneities of the being itself. We demand not only that the will be right, but that the affections and emotions shall be harmonious therewith." [91] And from this point of view the orthodox doctrine of human depravity has a certain justification. The native inclination to evil, though we are not responsible for it, does carry with it a certain sense of moral unworthiness. Having it, we necessarily stand condemned in the presence of the ideal. We all feel that we have come short of the

[89] Psa. 103. 14; 78. 39; Job 14. 1-4; 13. 25f.; 10. 8-14; 7. 12-21; Gen. 8. 21.

[90] *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 201.

[91] *Principles of Ethics*, p. 41.

glory of God, and the higher our spiritual attainments, the keener this feeling is likely to be. There is then a sense in which the natural weakness of man, instead of serving as an extenuation of sin, rather increases the consciousness of it, and makes all the more imperative the need of the divine grace. This standpoint, however, was not developed in the Old Testament.

How far, if at all, the Old Testament teaches the transmission of guilt is a question. There are certain facts that seem to imply it. It is, for instance, frequently stated that children were punished because of the sins of their fathers.[92] But this did not necessarily mean that the guilt of the fathers was transmitted by heredity to the children. For, according to the Old Testament, men were also punished for the sins of others to whom they stood in no direct blood relationship;[93] and in such cases there could, of course, be no thought of hereditary guilt. It should also be noted that children were *spared* or *blessed* because of the righteousness of their fathers or ancestors,[94] and such instances manifestly imply hereditary righteousness quite as much as the passages above cited imply hereditary guilt.

The passage most confidently quoted in support of the idea of hereditary guilt is Psa. 51. 5:

> "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity;
> And in sin did my mother conceive me."

Along with this verse may be placed Job 14. 4: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one;" and 25. 4: "How can he be clean that is born of a woman"?

[92] Exod. 20. 5; 34. 7; Lev. 26. 39; Num. 14. 18.
[93] Deut. 1. 37; 4. 21; Isa. 53; 2 Kings 23. 26; 24. 3f.
[94] Gen. 26. 24, J; Deut. 9. 26f.; 7. 9; 1 Kings 11. 12f.

Such passages as these readily suggest to us the idea of inherited sin, but it is by no means certain that they originally expressed anything more than the fact of the universality of sin. The author of Psalm 51 felt that he was not only personally sinful, but that he belonged to a sinful race. From the very beginning he had lived in an evil environment, so that sin had penetrated into the very marrow of his being.[95] His feeling, except that it was more intense, was like that of Isaiah, when he declared that he was a man of unclean lips and that he dwelt in the midst of a people of unclean lips.[96] The uncleanness of the people or race to which one belonged was regarded as permeating one's own life. How this was done is not explained. There is nowhere in the Old Testament any account of the origin of man's native inclination to evil. This inclination is simply accepted as a fact, a fact revealed by observation and introspection.

[95] Compare Psa. 58. 3; Isa. 48. 8.

[96] 6. 5.

CHAPTER XII

THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

The problem of suffering is closely connected with the doctrine of sin. Sin carries with it the idea both of guilt and of punishment. At least this is the case in the Old Testament. The attempt has been made in recent years to eliminate the idea of guilt from that of sin. "Guilt," it is said, "is not a feeling, but is an intellectual judgment," and as such it "can only be established when certain conditions exist, and whether these conditions are present or not is a matter entirely beyond our power to discover, and they certainly cannot be discerned by any intuitive sense." [1] The consciousness of sin, therefore, does not involve that of guilt, unless guilt perchance be understood as simply fear of punishment. But this, we are correctly told, is not the proper meaning of the term. Guilt means moral blameworthiness, and in this sense it has no place in the consciousness of sin. In a similar way it has been argued that punishment stands in no necessary connection with sin. Punishment of wrongdoing may be justified from the pedagogical point of view; but "retributive punishment is always either nonmoral or immoral. . . . The notion that wickedness *ought* somehow to be balanced by pain" is "wholly without foundation." [2]

These contentions, however, do not commend themselves to the unsophisticated conscience. Sin, as the aver-

[1] W. E. Orchard, *Modern Theories of Sin*, pp. 133, 136.
[2] William Temple, *The Faith and Modern Thought*, p. 140.

age mind sees it, cannot be dissociated from the idea of guilt without losing its ethical character; nor can it be disconnected from the idea of retribution without the sacrifice of one of the deepest convictions of the race. "One thing," as Bowne says, "on which the moral nature is categorical and unyielding is that moral good and moral evil shall not be treated alike. It would be the overthrow of the moral universe to hold that moral evil could ever be ignored as indifferent or treated as if it were good." [3] The ill desert of the evil will is a fundamental moral axiom. This does not mean that punishment may not have a remedial purpose. In so far as it is the work of a benevolent agent it naturally will have. But whether it has or not, it is the just desert of the evil will. Sin and punishment go together just as sin and guilt do. The three terms are involved in each other. This is the common judgment of men, and this is the view represented in the Old Testament. Indeed, the three ideas were so intimately related to each other in Hebrew thought that the same words were used to express them all. *Awon* meant not only "iniquity," [4] but also "guilt" [5] and "punishment." [6] The same was also true of *chattath*,[7] and *pesha*.[8] These terms denoted the guilt and punishment of sin or transgression as well as the sin or transgression itself.

In harmony with this view of the relation of sin, guilt, and punishment to each other, suffering in early times was

[3] *Studies in Christianity*, pp. 147f.
[4] Psa. 90. 8.
[5] Gen. 15. 16, E.
[6] Gen. 4. 13, J.
[7] Mic. 6. 7; Jer. 17. 1; Zech. 14. 19.
[8] Amos. 1. 3; Job. 34. 6; Dan. 9. 24.

looked upon as a penalty for sin. This was true not only of Israel but of ancient peoples generally. Indeed, there seems to have been a still earlier stage of thought in which suffering was referred to the arbitrary anger of the gods. Misfortune befell a person, not because of any sin he had committed, but because of the fitful wrath of some deity or spirit. The supernatural beings were not as yet thought of as guided by fixed rules or principles. They were subject to the impulses of the moment, and hence no one could tell when he might awaken their displeasure. But this stage of thought had largely passed away when Israel appeared upon the scene, and even if it had not, it was so inconsistent with the Mosaic conception of God that it could hardly have persisted among the Hebrews.

The view current in early Israel was that pain and misfortune were, to be sure, due to the divine wrath, but the divine wrath was not groundless. It was caused by human transgression. The transgression might take a variety of forms. It might be ceremonial[9] or distinctly ethical.[10] It might be intentional[11] or unintentional.[12] It might be one's own[13] or that of some relative.[14] It might be individual[15] or collective.[16] In each and all of these forms sin was made the ground of punishment. The punishment might be remedial, but more frequently it was regarded as simply retributive. In some cases the sense of guilt seems not to have been awakened

[9] 1 Sam. 14. 33.
[10] 1 Kings 21.
[11] 2 Sam. 11.
[12] 1 Sam. 14. 27, 43.
[13] Josh. 7. 20f.
[14] 2 Sam. 21. 2, 6.
[15] Gen. 9. 5f., P.
[16] Exod. 32. 30ff., E.

until the punishment was inflicted,[17] and this was probably often the case. But at other times it is stated that directly after the offense the offender's heart smote him.[18] There was in these early times no well-defined conception of sin, and no clear insight into the grounds of responsibility. The latter is especially noticeable, and constituted the chief defect in the ethics of the early Hebrews. They did not see the necessary connection between free will, on the one hand, and sin, guilt, and punishment, on the other. This was a point that could become clear only as a result of the growth of individualism. But the general belief that evil would be and was punished, was firmly held.

The punishment of sin, however, while the general rule of the divine procedure, was not an absolute principle, universally applicable. It did not account for all suffering. Misfortune might befall a man without its being a penalty for sin. This, for instance, was the case with Abner,[19] Amasa,[20] the sons of Gideon,[21] and the priests of Nob.[22] These men, though represented as guiltless of any special wrongdoing, were slain in cold blood. And so it was in war. The innocent fell with the guilty. As David said in concealment of his treachery toward Uriah the Hittite, "The sword devoureth one as well as another." [23] On the other hand, Yahweh did not always punish wrongdoers. Sins might be overlooked by him. Only when his attention was directed to them did he deal

[17] Gen. 42. 21f., E; 2 Sam. 21. 1ff.
[18] 1 Sam. 24. 6; 2 Sam. 24. 10.
[19] 2 Sam. 3. 33.
[20] 2 Sam. 20. 10.
[21] Judg. 9. 5.
[22] 1 Sam. 22. 18.
[23] 2 Sam. 11. 25.

with them as they deserved.[24] There was no strict law of retribution rigidly adhered to in human life. Yahweh acted in a sovereign way, doing what seemed to him good.[25]

Suffering and misfortune in early Israel were for the most part dealt with as isolated facts. But we have one significant narrative dealing with the general problem. This is Genesis 2-3 (J). Here some of the great ills of life are declared to be penalties imposed on man because of his primal sin. Those especially mentioned are, on woman's side, the pains of childbirth and the tyranny to which in antiquity she was subject at the hands of her husband; on man's side, the unresponsiveness of the soil, its useless and injurious products, and the laborious toil of agricultural life. To these ills it is customary to add that of death as the last and greatest. But a distinction needs to be made between death and the ills just spoken of. The latter were direct penalties for man's disobedience.[26] Death, on the other hand, was natural to man.[27] It was inherent in his constitution. Had he continued to live in paradise, he might, it is true, have escaped it. But this he would have done, not because he was by nature immortal, but because of the wonderful tree of life. That he became subject to death was not the direct penalty of sin, but the result of his being driven from paradise.[28] In effect this no doubt amounted to the same thing. But it is worth bringing out the fact that according to Genesis 3 death was not foreign to human nature as originally

[24] 1 Kings 17. 18; compare Gen. 44. 16; Gen. 16. 5; Exod. 5. 21.
[25] 2 Sam. 10. 12.
[26] 3. 17, 18.
[27] 3. 19.
[28] 3. 22.

constituted. It was not part of the curse pronounced on man. Still the significant fact in the narrative is that the operation of the law of death might have been avoided, if it had not been for man's sin. And in so far as this idea was current in early Israel, it gave to the common belief that suffering was due to sin a new depth and seriousness. Not only the occasional ills of life, but its basal evils, those that have woven themselves into the very texture of man's being, were now thought of as due to man's transgression of the divine law. This was a somber view to take of life, and it was probably not widely current in the preprophetic period.[29] But its presence even in limited circles reveals an early interest in some of the deeper questions connected with the fact of pain.

The most important contribution made by the eighth-century prophets to the development of thought relative to suffering is found in their insistence that the evils that had befallen and that threatened the nation were due primarily to violations of the ethical law. What aroused the divine anger was not neglect of the rites of religion, but social injustice, immorality, and inhumanity. Over and over again this thought was hammered into the conscience of the people, until finally the idea of a strictly moral government of the world was accepted as an established doctrine. In Deuteronomy a larger place in the field of human duty was accorded religious rites, but stress at the same time was laid on the ethical as an essential condition of the divine favor.[30] If the people obeyed the divine commandments, prosperity would be their lot; but if they failed to do so, adversity would just as cer-

[29] Compare 2 Sam. 14. 14.

[30] Deut. 24. 10-22; 25. 13-16.

tainly befall them.[31] It was chiefly national prosperity and national adversity that both the Deuteronomists and the earlier prophets had in mind, but the doctrine they laid down was general and on occasion was applied to individuals also.[32]

Thus far we have met with no protest against the idea that suffering is a penalty for sin. The idea was generally accepted; but it had not as yet been applied in a thoroughgoing way to life as a whole. In preprophetic Israel it was not claimed that every sin was punished. Sin itself was, furthermore, conceived in such an indefinite way as both intentional and unintentional, both ceremonial and ethical, that it furnished no clearly defined criterion for determining when suffering or adversity might be expected. With such a broad and elastic conception of sin it was always possible to find some sort of justification for whatever misfortune befell either the individual or the nation. The eighth-century prophets, it is true, limited the idea of sin largely to moral offenses, but they were concerned almost exclusively with the nation. And there conditions were so complex and so unideal both ethically and religiously, that no difficulty was experienced in discovering an adequate ground for the sufferings and disasters of the past, the present, and the future. But toward the close of the monarchy two important changes took place which made it less easy to hold to the principle of retributive righteousness as the one explanation of life's fortunes and misfortunes.

The first was the Deuteronomic reform (B. C. 621). It sought to put an end to the evils the prophets had de-

[31] Deut. 28. 1-14, 15-68.

[32] Amos 7. 16-17; Isa. 22. 15-18.

nounced, and so to avert the disaster threatening the state. Its aim was to make the prophetic teaching the official religion, and thus transform Israel into a holy nation. With such a noble aim the reform when adopted naturally created in the nation a consciousness of righteousness such as had not previously existed. The earlier afflictions had been deserved, but now it was to be expected that a better future would be theirs. This expectation, however, was doomed to disappointment. A brief period of virtual independence was followed by a disastrous defeat on the plain of Megiddo (B. C. 609). The pious king Josiah was slain, and the land became subject to Egypt with its oppressive taxes. This subjection continued for a few years, and then was followed by another equally onerous vassalage to the new Babylonian kingdom. Against this new bondage Judah rebelled, and the result was that Jerusalem was captured and a large number of its citizens deported (B. C. 597). A few years later another rebellion led to a similar result, except that Jerusalem was now completely destroyed and the national life terminated (B. C. 586). Under those circumstances it was inevitable that the question should be raised as to whether God had dealt justly with the nation. A people that had reformed its life and worship in accordance with the newly found book of the Law,[33] surely deserved a different fate from that which had befallen them. In their case at least suffering was not a just penalty for sin. The most that could be said for the traditional doctrine from their point of view was that the fathers had eaten sour grapes and hence the children's teeth were set on edge.[34] The wickedness of Manasseh

[33] 2 Kings 22. 1 to 23, 25.

[34] Jer. 31. 29; Ezek. 18. 2.

was responsible for the doom that befell the nation.[35] But considerations such as these did not suffice to quiet the awakened mind and conscience of the people. A problem had been raised that could not so easily be disposed of.

The other change above referred to was the growth of individualism due to the prophetic teaching and the disintegration of the state. Even after the Deuteronomic reform Jeremiah had no difficulty in finding a sufficient ground for the disasters that befell the nation in the wickedness and disloyalty of the people. The reform effected by Josiah had been only on the surface. Judah had returned unto Yahweh, but only "feignedly." [36] At heart the people were still corrupt. A radical change of character was needed. So it seemed to Jeremiah; and in a similar way it perhaps has always been possible in the complex life of a nation to find an ethical ground for whatever misfortunes have befallen it. Practically every nation contains so many diverse elements that, if one chooses, he can almost invariably establish a causal connection between the sufferings of the present and some guilt of the past. But when it comes to the individual, it is often not so easy to apply the law of retribution. For here the correctness of the law can be more readily tested. The factors involved are simpler and less numerous. They are for the most part open to direct observation, and where not, the conscience of the individual serves as a witness. To be sure, it is still possible in individual cases, where the principle of retribution does not seem to hold, to insist that a person's sufferings are due to sins of which others know nothing and which may even in part be hidden from the person himself. This was the atti-

[35] 2 Kings 24. 3f.

[36] 3. 10.

tude taken by Job's friends. But their position was simply the last recourse of a defeated theory. It could not keep back the insistent pressure of facts nor break the plain testimony of conscience. To every unprejudiced observer it was clear that the innocent did at times suffer while the wicked prospered. Hence it was inevitable that serious questionings and protests should arise when the prophetic doctrine of retribution came to be applied in a strict way to the life of the individual.

Then, too, the theory that prosperity and adversity are rewards and punishments for good and evil conduct, is defective from the religious point of view. It has, to be sure, a considerable basis of fact. The laws of nature and of society are such that he who violates them will as a rule suffer for it. "The way of the transgressor is hard." [37] And even where there is no consciousness of special guilt, sudden misfortune speaks with a warning voice to the human spirit. The modern mind may agree with Lecky that the belief that calamity is a punishment for sin, is "a baseless and pernicious superstition." "But all the same," as McFadyen says, "to the sensitive heart every disaster speaks an urgent message. We have no right to interpret it as the punishment of others, but we have every right to regard it as a call to ourselves—a call to reflection and repentance." [38] This was in the main the standpoint of the early prophets. They regarded "each calamity, as it fell, more as a call than a chastisement." But this profounder viewpoint was easily overlooked. And the tendency was for the doctrine of retribution as commonly held to give rise to a utilitarian type of morality. If uprightness and piety always lead to

[37] Prov. 13. 15.

[38] *A Cry for Justice*, pp. 46f.

health and prosperity, they will naturally tend to be cultivated because of their results rather than for their own sake. Virtue thus becomes prudence. It ceases to be devotion to principle and becomes a means to a material end. The pious man feels that he must be rewarded for his piety, or God is not just.

But more serious than the utilitarian tendency of the principle of retribution was its bearing on the relation of religion to the unfortunate members of society: the poor, the burdened, the oppressed, the wretched. If health and prosperity are invariable results of the divine favor, it is evident that it is the strong and the successful to whom the comforts of religion especially appertain. The sick and the needy lie beyond its sphere. This view was widely held in antiquity. "The unhappy leper, in his life-long affliction, was shut out from the exercises of religion as well as from the privileges of social life. So too the mourner was unclean, and his food was not brought into the house of God; the very occasions of life in which spiritual things are nearest to the Christian, and the comfort of religion most fervently sought, were in the ancient world the times when a man was forbidden to approach the seat of God's presence. To us . . . this seems a cruel law; nay, our sense of justice is offended by a system in which misfortunes set up a barrier between a man and his God." [39]

Our feeling on this point must also have manifested itself to some degree in ancient Israel. At least, the idea that the unfortunate were shut out from the comforts of religion must have clashed with the early and deepseated conviction that Yahweh was in a special sense the protector of the weak and the needy, the fatherless and the

[39] W. R. Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 259.

widows. A contradiction was thus created in the religious consciousness of the people. Logically, it may have seemed to them that need was an evidence of the divine disfavor; the law of retribution apparently required it. But actually it must have been clear that it was need which above all things drove men to God. God could not, therefore, withdraw himself from the needy. Such action would be contrary to his inmost nature. The very instinct, consequently, that lies at the root of religion, was opposed to a strict and logical application of the principle of retribution.

The earliest book to raise a question as to the justice of God's dealings with the *nation* was that of Habakkuk, provided we accept the common view as to its date. Duhm[40] has assigned the book of Habakkuk to the time of Alexander the Great, holding that instead of "Chaldeans" in 1. 6 the text originally read *Kittim,* meaning the European Greeks;[41] but very few have followed him in this conclusion. Some contend that the main body of the book (omitting 1. 5-11 and chapter 3) came from the exile. But most scholars hold that it dates from the closing years of the seventh century. The interpretation of the book is beset with numerous difficulties. The author is manifestly perplexed by the unjust conditions he sees about him. He cannot understand how God can hold his peace "when the wicked swalloweth up the man that is more righteous than he."[42] But what gave rise to the

[40] *Das Buch Habakuk,* published in 1906. Duhm's view is accepted by Max Haller in *Die Schriften des Alten Testaments,* ii, 3, pp. 213ff.

[41] Compare 1 Macc. 1. 1; 8. 5.

[42] 1. 13.

prophet's problem is not certain. Was it the sufferings of Judah at the hands of the Chaldeans, or at the hands of the Assyrians, or at the hands of the Egyptians? Or was it perhaps local conditions within Judah itself? According to many, it was the latter that at first formed the subject of the prophet's complaint.[43] He asks how God can permit such violence, injustice, and oppression as prevail in Judah. The answer given is that Yahweh is about to raise up the Chaldeans to punish the wicked Israelites.[44] But a Chaldean invasion would mean that all Judah would suffer, and hence the question arose as to how Yahweh could use a wicked nation like Chaldea to punish Judah, a people more righteous than they.[45] That this, however, was the line of thought in the prophet's mind is improbable. "The wicked" in verse 4 is most naturally identified with "the wicked" in verse 13, and in the latter verse it is evident that a foreign tyrant is referred to. Whether this tyrant was Assyria or Babylonia or Egypt, does not matter much, so far as the general teaching of the book is concerned. Judah in any case is represented as a righteous people oppressed by a wicked foreign power. It was this fact that gave rise to and that constituted the prophet's problem.[46]

The conception of Judah as "righteous" by way of contrast with other peoples would most naturally have arisen shortly after the Deuteronomic reform, and it was

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[43] Hab. 1. 2-4.

[44] 1. 5-11.

[45] 1. 12-17.

[46] If 1. 5-11 were transferred to chap. 2 and placed between verses 3 and 4, the interpretation of the book would be considerably simplified. The foreign tyrant would then be Assyria, and Chaldea would be the power raised up to punish the wicked Assyrians.

probably at that time that the book of Habakkuk was written. The book of Nahum, it may be noted, also dates from about the same time, and it too has nothing to say of the sin of Judah, though it vents its wrath on Assyria. A similar and even more bitter feeling toward Babylonia no doubt arose a little later, especially after the fall of Jerusalem; and it is possible, though less likely, that the book of Habakkuk was written during the exile. "If," says A. S. Peake, "Habakkuk saw his vision in the gloomy period before the fall of Jerusalem, his problem arises because he feels so keenly the strange contrast between the fair promise of the happiness that should follow on reform, and the dark fulfillment now that reform has come. If it was during the exile, then the destruction of the Jewish state and the captivity are responsible for much of the prophet's perplexity, and the Reformation falls into the background." [47] Should we accept the latter view, Habakkuk would still be the first prophet for whom the sufferings of the nation constituted a problem; for both Jeremiah and Ezekiel looked upon the calamities that befell Judah as abundantly deserved. But the earlier date is the more probable, and it, of course, makes more evident the unique distinction of Habakkuk. His book marked "the beginning of speculation in Israel." It is this fact that gives to it its special significance in the history of Old Testament religion. The solution, however, which it offers to the problem it raises can hardly be said to go beyond the teaching of the past. Righteousness, we are assured, will ultimately triumph. The prosperity of the wicked will not last; the heathen oppressor will be destroyed.[48] On the other hand, the sufferings

[47] *The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*, p. 5.

[48] *c.* 5-20.

of Judah will soon be ended; the righteous will live because of his faithfulness.[49]

The problem of suffering, so far as it relates to the *individual,* was first raised by Jeremiah. "Wherefore," he asks, "doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they at ease that deal very treacherously?" [50] The wicked, it is here implied, ought to suffer, but do not. To his question why this is so, the prophet received no direct answer. The fact itself, he was told, was so familiar that there was no reason why he should concern himself about it.[51] Then, too, the general problem of suffering was in his case pushed aside by the pressure of his own personal peril and pain. Over and over again he was driven into a state of rebellion as he contemplated his own experiences, the persecutions to which he was subject and the sufferings that befell him.[52] God, he felt, had not dealt justly with him. He had been to him "as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail." [53] He had enticed him and overpersuaded him to become a prophet, and then had left him to suffer all manner of reproach from men.[54] But this sense of unjust treatment at the hands of God was not a fixed conviction with Jeremiah. It did not represent an objective fact to be explained; it was, rather, a feeling to be overcome. In his better moments he saw clearly that the complaining of which he had been guilty was "vile." There was something in his relation to Yahweh so "precious" that all rebellious feel-

[49] 2. 4.
[50] 12. 1.
[51] 12. 5.
[52] 20. 7-18; 18. 18-20; 15. 15-17.
[53] 15. 18.
[54] 20. 7ff.; 15. 15.

ing ought to have been silenced.[55] We have here a suggestion of the thought that fellowship with God is the *summum bonum* of life, and that as compared with it the sufferings we endure as servants of God are not worthy to be considered. This attitude of mind does not, it is true, solve the mystery of pain, but it does give him who consciously makes it his own a standpoint from which he can view with equanimity his own afflictions. And this was Jeremiah's chief contribution to the problem of suffering. He showed by his own experience not only that suffering was not inconsistent with fellowship with God, but that in the light of this fellowship no ground could be found for complaint against the divine justice.

Ezekiel dealt in a more objective and dogmatic way with the subject of suffering. So far as the nation is concerned, his position did not differ essentially from that of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and the eighth-century prophets. The doom of Judah was abundantly deserved. It was the inevitable outcome of her long history of unfaithfulness. If there is anything new in Ezekiel on this point, it is to be found in the interest he manifests in justifying the ways of God.[56] "His own problem is not to reconcile with justice the hard fate of Israel, but to clear the fair name of Yahweh from the aspersions cast upon it. If he seeks to justify the ways of God to man, it is rather that God may be vindicated than that man's heart may be at peace. He never felt the pressure of the mystery of suffering." [57] This applies also to his attitude toward the individual. He pleads with the individual Israelites not

[55] 15. 19.

[56] Compare 14. 21-23.

[57] A. S. Peake, *The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*, p. 23.

to continue in their sinful course. "For why," he asks, "will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord Jehovah: wherefore turn yourselves and live." [58] But the doom, when it came and however it might come, was a just doom. God's ways were always "equal." To this there were no exceptions. Here it is that Ezekiel made his contribution to our problem. He asserted in unqualified terms the doctrine of individual retribution. There is no such thing as inherited guilt or vicarious suffering. Every man is punished for his own sins, and for them alone. For this doctrine much could be said from the standpoint of abstract ethics and from the point of view of the individual's ultimate destiny, and it is probable that Ezekiel approached the subject from these points of view. But when applied to concrete conditions his teaching led to unavoidable difficulty. Facts conflicted with theory, and it became a serious problem how to adjust the one to the other. The problem might be temporarily postponed by a denial of the facts, but this method could not long prove satisfactory.

The times demanded that the subject of suffering both as related to the nation and the individual be dealt with in a more thoroughgoing way than had yet been done. Especially was this true after the fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586. In response to this demand there appeared "two Hebrew writers of supreme intellectual and spiritual power." [59] The first lived toward the close of the exile. His name is unknown, but his utterances are preserved in the latter part of the book of Isaiah, and hence he is com-

[58] 18. 31f.

[59] James Strahan, *The Book of Job*, p. 3.

monly known as Deutero-Isaiah. The problem of suffering as it presented itself to his mind had to do with the nation. It may be that the Suffering Servant whom he describes originally referred to some individual to whom Messianic significance was ascribed.[60] But in their present context the socalled Servant-passages[61] manifestly refer to Israel. Israel had suffered grievously. These sufferings were due in part to her sins,[62] but only in part. To some extent they were like the sufferings of Jeremiah, the sufferings of a martyr.[63] Israel had been loyal to her divine mission, and hence had been subject to bitter persecution. But this did not suffice as an explanation of her afflictions. Deutero-Isaiah saw in them something moré, a new factor, unmentioned before: they were *vicarious* and *redemptive*.[64] To outward appearances exiled Israel was like one "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." But her restoration made it evident that such was not actually the case. Israel was not a special object of the divine disfavor. Rather was her exile the means through which the knowledge of the true God was being brought to the idolatrous heathen. This they recognized, and hence they are represented as saying that Israel was wounded for *their* transgressions and bruised for *their* iniquities. The sufferings that befell Israel ought to have fallen on *them*. And not only were her sufferings thus vicarious. They also served a redemptive purpose. They were a means of healing, a chastisement that won for the

[60] E. Sellin first suggested Zerubbabel and then later Jehoiachin, whose long imprisonment and final release (2 Kings 25. 27-30) might conceivably be figuratively described in Isa. 53.

[61] 42. 1-4; 49. 1-6; 50. 4-9; 52. 13 to 53. 12.

[62] 40. 2; 42. 24f.; 43. 22-28; 50. 1.

[63] 50. 5-9.

[64] 53. 4-6.

heathen peace of soul. The very fact that Israel's sufferings were undeserved, that they were endured for others, brought home to the heathen a poignant consciousness of their own sins, and wrought in them a change of heart. It led to repentance and confession, and to the recognition of Israel's God as God of all the world. Such an end might well justify and sanctify any affliction and any sacrifice. No deeper or higher thought concerning suffering is anywhere to be found.

It is strange that this profound conception of suffering as vicarious and redemptive seems to have been without effect upon the later development of Hebrew thought. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is there any reference to it.[65] Not even the second of the two Hebrew writers above referred to, the author of the book of Job, takes note of it. The reason perhaps is that the idea of vicarious suffering did not admit of such obvious application to an individual like Job as to the nation. Some scholars, it is true, see in Job "a type of the godly portion of the nation," [66] and look upon him as representing "somewhat the same thing which the servant in Deutero-Isaiah represents—the ideal Israel, or . . . the faithful Israel in captivity and humiliation." [67] But there is nothing in the text to support this view. "It is not with the nation that the poet is concerned, but with the individual, not with Israel but with man, not with God's discipline of his people, but with his government of the world." [68]

[65] It is not again referred to or employed until 4 Macc. 1. 11; 6. 29; 17. 21f.

[66] A. B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 457f.

[67] J. P. Peters, *The Religion of the Hebrews*, p. 332.

[68] A. S. Peake, *The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*, p. 83f.

When the book of Job was written we do not know, but it was probably a century or two after the time of Deutero-Isaiah. The author takes up the problem of suffering where it had been left by Ezekiel. Ezekiel had disposed of the problem by denying the facts upon which it was based. The wicked, he contended, did not prosper, and the righteous did not suffer. Suffering was, consequently, an evidence of sin. This became the orthodox doctrine. In its positive form it is frequently expressed. It constitutes "the burden of many of the psalms and of the whole book of Proverbs, as well as the perpetually recurrent moral of all the Hebrew histories." We read that

> "evildoers shall be cut off;
> But those that wait for Jehovah, they shall inherit the land." [69]

> "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth;
> How much more the wicked and the sinner!" [70]

In this doctrine there is no doubt much truth, but when applied in such a way as to teach that all suffering proceeds from sin it comes into glaring conflict with the facts of life. And here it is that the author of Job takes his start. It is his fundamental contention that the traditional doctrine is false. The righteous do suffer and the wicked do prosper. And the suffering and the prosperity are not merely of brief duration. They often continue until death.[71]

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[69] Psa. 37. 9.
[70] Prov. 11. 31.
[71] Job 21. 7-34.

But if this be so, what function does suffering fulfill in the life of the righteous? Two positive answers are given in the book of Job. The first is found in the prologue. Here we are told that the afflictions of Job were a test of his righteousness. They were an attempt to determine whether his loyalty to God was sincere, whether it was devotion to him for his own sake, or whether it was based on self-interest. The result of the testing was a proof of the genuineness of Job's piety. "The words, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust him' [72]—it is pretty generally agreed—do not represent what Job said or could have said in that particular context; but they do represent the whole attitude of the man." [73] His piety stood far above utilitarian considerations. It was an expression of pure ethical idealism. And what proved it to be such was the sufferings he endured. They showed that he was quite willing to serve God for nought. Another function performed by suffering is that of disciplining and refining the life of the righteous. Says Eliphaz:

> "Happy is the man whom God correcteth;
> Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.
> For he maketh sore, and bindeth up;
> He woundeth, and his hands make whole." [74]

This idea was elaborated still further by Elihu.[75] It was not strictly applicable in Job's case, but it nevertheless expresses an important truth. Suffering does often deepen, enrich, and mellow the lives of those who accept

[72] 13. 15.

[73] J. E. McFadyen, *The Problem of Pain: A Study in the Book of Job*, p. 287.

[74] 5. 17-18.

[75] 33. 15-30; 36. 8-21.

it in the right spirit. It is, then, not an unmixed evil. It has its place even in the life of the righteous.

But while these considerations have their value, they by no means fully solve our problem. The suffering of the righteous still has to it unplumbed depths, and the book of Job frankly confesses its inability to sound them. It does, however, make one or two further suggestions that should not be overlooked. One is that suffering has a purpose in human life whether we are able to discern it or not. This is implied in the prologue and also in the speeches of the Almighty. What takes place in the heavenly council we cannot ourselves observe, and the universe itself is so vast and intricate that it would be folly for us to insist on comprehending it in its every detail. But that the suffering of the righteous does have a place in the divine plan, that it does have a meaning, is guaranteed by the very character of God himself. The wisdom and love manifest in nature as a whole assure us that our afflictions are not purposeless. What their purpose is we may not understand, but where we cannot understand we can always trust. Then, too, there is the suggestion that death does not close the case. In one supreme moment Job rises to the assurance that the justice denied him here will be granted him in the world beyond.[76] This assurance did not apparently remain with him, but the door of hope thus opened was one through which many a suffering and sorrowing heart was destined to walk in the ages to come.

In spite of Job's vigorous attack upon it the traditional doctrine concerning suffering continued to be widely held, as we see from the later strata of the book of Proverbs.

[76] 19. 25ff.

Adversity and wickedness, on the one hand, and prosperity and righteousness, on the other, were supposed to go together. But this was a teaching which it was increasingly difficult to hold. Pessimists like the author of Ecclesiastes rejected it outright,[77] and the apocalyptists were forced to look to the future for its realization. The latter standpoint is represented by Psalm 37. It is here repeatedly insisted that the wicked will soon be cut off (verses 2, 9, 22, 28, 34, 38), and the righteous will then inherit the land (verses 9, 11, 22, 29, 34). God will before long intervene in a miraculous way in the world, and the injustices that now prevail will then be righted.

Besides this psalm there are two others that also deal specifically with our problem, the forty-ninth and seventy-third. These psalms, like the thirty-seventh, look to the future for their source of comfort, but they find it not in an imminent catastrophe but in life after death. According to Psalm 49 the wicked in spite of their wealth cannot escape death but are compelled to go down into the dim underworld. The psalmist himself, however, has the assurance that after death God will take him to live with himself. In Psalm 73 the contrast is made still more emphatic. The wicked in the world beyond are here represented as cast down to ruin and utterly consumed with terrors, while the psalmist himself is received up into glory. But even more significant than this thought is the author's vivid consciousness of the overshadowing presence of God:

"Whom have I in heaven *but thee?*
And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

[77] 7. 15; 8. 14; 9. 2.

These words give us "a wonderful picture of the soul in deep, untroubled fellowship with God, so deep that death cannot sever it, so perfect that heaven itself can add nothing to it. . . . Nowhere else in the Old Testament is the essence of religion set forth with such power and such beauty, no passage makes so deep an appeal to our inmost heart." [78]

We do not, it is true, have here a formal solution of the problem of suffering. Such a solution, indeed, is impossible. But we have something better: we have an attitude of soul, a spiritual experience, by means of which the problem is transcended. It is good to know that our sufferings may be a trial of our faith, a test of our righteousness, that they may in the providence of God be vicarious and redemptive, that they have a disciplinary value, and that they will ultimately give way to a happier future; but it is better still to have a vision of God so rapturous that the sufferings of the present lose their sting, and life is permitted to go on in unruffled peace. It was such an experience toward which Jeremiah and Job struggled, to which the author of Psalm 73 attained, and which Jesus promised his disciples when he said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14. 27).

[78] A. S. Peake, *The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*, p. 117.

CHAPTER XIII

FORGIVENESS AND ATONEMENT

Sin, as the Old Testament writers conceived it, was something more than "moral growing pains." It carried with it the idea of alienation from God. This sense of alienation may originally have been due to a purely external cause, some misfortune or physical affliction. It may have had no connection with moral shortcoming. But it was nevertheless real, and it was practically universal. Suffering and adversity spoke to primitive men generally of an offended deity. The evils of life were themselves an evidence of the divine displeasure, and they could be removed only by winning back the divine favor. In times of need it became, therefore, a matter of special interest to secure the divine forgiveness; and the more urgent the need, the deeper and more permanent the consciousness of sin, the more important became everything that had to do with forgiveness and atonement in the religious life and thought of men. In our day it is said that the message of forgiveness is "less and less able to stir any deep interest in the average man or to attract the attention of the mass of the people. It seems to strike them as an irrelevant message: it is not what they want, it does not meet any need of which they are vividly conscious." It is at the best "a symbolical recognition of the idea that sin is something man should not brood over, but something which is to be worked off, by thinking as little as possible about sin as a religious problem." [1] But if this

[1] W. E. Orchard, *Modern Theories of Sin*, pp. 137, 138f.

be the modern mood, it stands far removed from that which prevailed in ancient Judaism and early Christianity. In the Bible forgiveness and atonement are ideas of central importance.

The close connection which in ancient Israel was supposed to exist between sin and suffering led naturally to the view that forgiveness manifests itself in the improvement of one's physical or material condition. As affliction was a sign of the divine displeasure, so its removal was evidence of the divine forgiveness. The forgiveness of sins as a purely spiritual experience unrelated to the outward fortunes of life lay beyond the range of at least early Israelitic thought. Sin and punishment were so intimately bound up together that the forgiveness of the one carried with it the removal of the other, and *vice versa*. In this day we deem it important to distinguish "between forgiveness as the removal of personal displacence and forgiveness as the canceling of natural consequences." "Forgiveness," we are told, "does not cancel consequences. . . . So long as one wishes to be saved not from sin but from the penalty of sin, there can be no salvation for him. . . . True salvation is from sin, not from penalty." [2] But this sharp distinction between sin and penalty the early Israelite did not make. Salvation, as he conceived it, meant primarily deliverance from the temporal and material ills of life. It meant for the nation deliverance from Egypt,[3] victory over its enemies,[4] return from exile,[5] and general prosperity.[6] For the indi-

[2] B. P. Bowne, *Studies in Christianity*, p. 156f.
[3] Exod. 14. 30, J; 15. 2.
[4] 1 Sam. 9. 16; 2 Sam. 3. 18; Deut. 20. 2-4.
[5] Jer. 23. 5-8; 46. 27; Psa. 106. 47.
[6] 1 Sam 10. 19; Psa. 118. 25.

vidual it likewise meant escape from danger,[7] recovery from sickness,[8] and enjoyment of the good things of life.[9] Among these good things forgiveness of sin was no doubt one. But it was a deduction from the outward blessings of life rather than a distinct inward experience. It did not, it would seem, necessarily imply a complete canceling of the penalty of sin. In Exod. 34. 7 we, for instance, read of Yahweh as "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, *although he does not leave it unpunished.*" [10] Punishment and forgiveness did not thus form a complete antithesis. Death excluded the thought of forgiveness, but a less extreme penalty apparently did not. This is illustrated in the case of David. Nathan announces that a certain punishment will be meted out to him because of his sin, and then adds, "Jehovah also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." [11] Forgiveness of sin did not here carry with it the complete removal of the just penalty. But this conception of forgiveness received only isolated expression. In general, suffering was looked upon as a penalty for sin, and only the removal of the penalty could give rise to the consciousness of forgiveness.

A more independent conception of forgiveness was only very gradually developed. Two different stages, or perhaps, rather, factors, in its development may be distinguished. First, the prophetic stress on the ethical requirements of Yahweh, both objective and subjective,

[7] 2 Sam. 22. 3f.

[8] Isa. 38. 1ff.; 2 Sam. 12. 16ff.

[9] Gen. 39. 3; Job 30. 15.

[10] See C. F. Kent's translation in *The Student's Old Testament.* Compare Num. 14, 18.

[11] 2 Sam. 12. 13.

tended to give to the inner life of the soul an importance it had not had before. Forgiveness of sins and purity of heart came to have a value in and of themselves. They might lead to outward fortune, but altogether apart from that they had a worth of their own. Regeneration of soul was a good to be sought for its own sake. Salvation did not consist simply in deliverance from the consequences of sin, but in deliverance from sin itself. We first find this clearly expressed in Jeremiah. As the prophet realized the weakness and sinfulness of his own heart, he cried: "Heal me, O Jehovah, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved." [12] The salvation for which he here prays is manifestly an inner process, a healing of the soul. It is a similar conception also that appears in his description of the new covenant, a covenant to be written in the hearts of the people. "I will forgive," says Yahweh, "their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more." [13] Even more distinctly is this thought expressed in Ezekiel. "I will sprinkle," we read, "clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes. . . . And I will save you from all your uncleannesses." [14] In Deutero-Isaiah this idea is also made prominent. Forgiveness of sins appears as the chief blessing of the Messianic age. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; I have

[12] 17. 14.
[13] Jer. 31. 34.
[14] 36. 25-29.

blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." [15] But more strikingly still is the thought of forgiveness and regeneration expressed in Psalm 51:

> Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
> Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. . . .
> Create in me a clean heart, O God;
> And renew a right spirit within me.
> Cast me not away from thy presence;
> And take not thy holy Spirit from me.
> Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,
> And uphold me with a willing spirit" (verses 7, 10-12).

Another factor that contributed to the differentiation of the assurance of divine forgiveness from the outward experiences of life was the Messianic hope. This hope implied that in the existing order rewards and punishments were not meted out justly either to nations or individuals. In the better and not distant future it would be different. But at present outward fortune was no certain test of one's status in the sight of God. And if so, a change of attitude toward God would not necessarily be accompanied by an immediate change in the physical or material conditions of one's life. God might conceivably forgive a man his sins, and yet allow him for a time at least to remain subject to some form of adversity. This idea is manifestly implied in the Messianic hope, and it is also implied in such interpretations of suffering as are found in Deutero-Isaiah and the book of Job. If suffering be vicarious and redemptive, if it is a test of one's

[15] Isa. 43. 25; 44. 22.

righteousness, it is evident that its removal is not necessary to the consciousness of forgiveness and of the divine favor. These spiritual blessings may be enjoyed without reference to the outward experiences of life. But while the Old Testament points forward to this truth, and while some of the Hebrew saints, such as Jeremiah, Job, and the author of Psalm 73, anticipated it in their own experience, it cannot be said to have been fully grasped in Old Testament times. The consciousness of sin and forgiveness continued to be more or less closely connected with external fortune. Even Psalm 51 seems to have had as its background suffering of some kind, either that of the nation or of the author, probably the latter (verse 8).

The ultimate ground of forgiveness was the divine mercy. This was the teaching of the Old Testament as a whole, the Law as well as the Prophets. Sacrifice, whatever value it may have had, was "the fruit of grace, not its root." Yahweh was a God of mercy; he was such by nature.[16] He was also righteous. But righteousness did not exclude mercy; it, rather, included it. Yahweh was "a just God and a Saviour." [17] The two qualities went together. There was nothing in the nature of Yahweh as such that made him reluctant to forgive sin. Not even his wrath excluded the thought of mercy.[18] "The conception," as G. B. Stevens says, "that retributive justice is the fundamental, essential quality of God, and that mercy is a secondary and optional attribute whose operation has to be secured or provided for by means of some 'plan' or 'scheme,' is not only without warrant in

[16] Psa. 103. 8ff.; Joel 2. 13.
[17] Isa. 45. 21; compare Exod. 34. 6f.; Num. 14. 18.
[18] Hab. 3. 2.

the Old Testament, but is entirely irreconcilable with the Hebrew idea of God in the classic period of Israel's religion. It is more accordant with the conceptions of late Jewish theology as illustrated in popular Pharisaism." [19] In the Old Testament longsuffering and compassion is represented as a fundamental characteristic of the divine mind. Wrath is a mere affection, a transient feeling.[20] It does not express the true nature and essence of God. While capable of wrath, Yahweh is slow to anger,[21] and does not keep his anger forever.[22]

The gracious disposition of Yahweh was at first manifested almost exclusively within and toward Israel. The rationale of this special relation to Israel is nowhere given. At times it seems to be the result of a sovereign and arbitrary choice. "I will be gracious," says Yahweh, "to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." [23] The special favor shown Israel is expressed in various ways. It is, for instance, said that Yahweh defers his anger, saves Israel, and forgives her sins "for his own sake" or "for his name's sake." [24] "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and I will not remember thy sins." [25] The point to such statements as these is that Yahweh has a world purpose and that the accomplishment of that purpose required him to show to Israel a degree of favor that she did not deserve. Her sins were

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[19] *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation*, p. 29.
[20] Psa. 30. 5.
[21] Neh. 9. 17; Jonah 4. 2; Nah. 1. 3.
[22] Mic. 7. 18; Jer. 3. 12.
[23] Exod. 33. 19, J.
[24] Isa. 48. 9, 11; Psa. 106. 8; Ezek. 20. 9, 14, 22.
[25] Isa. 43. 25.

forgiven and she was redeemed, not because she had fully met the conditions of forgiveness and redemption, but because only in this way could Yahweh achieve his purpose and cause his name to be honored among the nations of the world. If he had failed to redeem Israel, his failure would have been attributed to weakness, and his name would thus have been profaned among the heathen.[26] It was consequently for his own sake that he deferred his anger and forgave Israel her sins.

Another motive to the divine forgiveness occasionally referred to in the Old Testament is Yahweh's regard for the patriarchs and for David. Moses, for instance, thus prays: "O Lord Jehovah, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance. . . . Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin." [27] And in 2 Kings we read that "Jehovah would not destroy Judah, for David his servant's sake." [28] "I will defend," says Yahweh, "this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake." [29] Back of this representation there probably lay the idea that the patriarchs and David were representative of ideal Israel, and that ideal Israel was the bearer of the divine purpose in the world. But ideal Israel could not accomplish its purpose apart from actual Israel. For the patriarchs' sake, therefore, for the sake of ideal Israel, it pleased God to forgive actual Israel, the Israel of history. The feeling that lay back of this thought seems to have been akin to that expressed by the poet Browning: "What I aspired to be,

[26] Ezek. 36. 16-23; Deut. 32. 26-27; Num. 14. 15-20, J.
[27] Deut. 9. 26, 27; compare Exod. 32. 12-13.
[28] 8. 19.
[29] 19. 34; compare 1 Kings 11. 13, 32; 15. 4.

and was not, comforts me," and he might have added, "assures me of the divine favor."

But the two motives to forgiveness just stated appear only occasionally and incidentally in the Old Testament. The one on which the prophets lay almost exclusive stress, and which constitutes the only rational and ethical condition of forgiveness, is repentance and reformation. This, of course, includes faith. But faith did not receive such emphasis in the Old Testament as in the New. Isaiah repeatedly urges the need of faith in Yahweh as against foreign alliances and trust in merely human powers.[30] In Habakkuk we have the pregnant saying that the just shall live by his faith or, rather, faithfulness.[31] And of Abraham it is said that "he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness."[32] But no proper doctrine of faith in the later New Testament sense of the term is to be found in the Old Testament. There is no antithesis between faith and works. Yet faith in Yahweh is everywhere assumed as a duty and as a condition of reconciliation with him. The call to repentance and obedience was also a call to faith. It was, however, the former rather than the latter that was stressed by the prophets. They were constantly summoning the people to return unto Yahweh and to obey his voice.[33] "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live," was the cry of Amos;[34] and this was also the burden of the prophets as a whole. Only a complete change of life could win back

[30] 7. 9; 28. 16; 30. 15.
[31] 2. 4.
[32] Gen. 15. 6, J.
[33] Hos. 14. 1; Jer. 3. 22; 11. 7; Ezek. 33. 11.
[34] 5. 14.

the divine favor. No fitful repentance would suffice.[35] There must be a radical change of character,[36] an earnest, whole-hearted searching after God.[37]

Where these conditions were met, there was from the prophetic point of view no further obstacle to the divine forgiveness. Yet we do find in the prophetic and extra-ritual literature of the Old Testament other factors that at times entered into the bestowal of forgiveness. There was, for instance, the intercession of devout and righteous men. Abraham interceded for Sodom; and his prayer, while it did not effect the deliverance of the city, resulted in the rescue of Lot.[38] Moses interceded for Israel at the time when the golden calf was made; and Yahweh, we read, "repented of the evil which he said he would do unto his people." [39] Amos besought the divine forgiveness when the existence of Israel was threatened, and twice his prayer was answered.[40] Jeremiah also repeatedly interceded for the people, but in his case it is implied that the time for intercession was past.[41] No rationale of intercessory prayer is given. Ezekiel virtually denies its efficacy.[42] But in the Old Testament as a whole it is assumed as an established practice. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man was supposed to avail much in behalf of the guilty. A theoretical basis for this belief, if such were needed, might be found in the ancient conception of the

[35] Hos. 6. 1-4.
[36] Jer. 4. 3-4.
[37] Deut. 4. 29.
[38] Gen. 18. 23-33, J; 19. 29, P.
[39] Exod. 32. 14, J? compare 32. 30-35, E.
[40] 7. 1-6.
[41] 7. 16; 11. 14; 14. 11; 15. 1.
[42] 14. 12-20.

solidarity of society. But apart from that the analogy of human experience furnishes an adequate explanation. Intercession often avails in the relation of man to man; and if so, the ancient saw no reason why it should not avail also in the relation of man to God.

Another factor that seems at times to have served as a motive to the divine forgiveness was the partial punishment of sin. The partial punishment revealed the divine wrath, and this under certain circumstances was accepted as sufficient. The best illustration of this is furnished by Phinehas at the time when the Israelites were being visited by a severe plague because of their whoredom on the plains of Moab.[43] Phinehas slew an Israelite and a Midianitish woman whom he found together in the camp. And "so," we read, "the plague was stayed from the children of Israel." Phinehas, said Yahweh, "hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. . . . Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace, . . . because he was jealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel." The infliction of a partial penalty by a man filled with divine zeal served to reveal the divine wrath in such a way that no further punishment was felt to be necessary. A similar idea underlies the common Old Testament representation, that while Yahweh punished his people for their sins he did not make a full end of the nation.[44] Mercy intervened before the punishment was complete. Indeed, in his grace Yahweh might even feel that the partial penalty he had inflicted on

[43] Num. 25. 1-13.

[44] Amos 9. 8; Jer. 4. 27; 5. 18; 30. 11.

the people was more than they had merited.[45] A full punishment of sin was not necessary to meet the demands of the divine justice. "The idea," as Skinner says, "that Yahweh's penal purpose can be satisfied by a temporary chastisement is of the very essence of the Old Testament notion of forgiveness." [46]

Yet another and more significant factor that entered into the prophetic teaching relative to forgiveness is found in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Here the suffering innocently borne by another is made the motive of forgiveness. Israel bears the punishment that ought to have fallen upon the guilty heathen, and thus makes possible their redemption. The effect of his suffering is double. It satisfies the divine demand for the punishment of sin, and at the same time it acts as a regenerating influence in the life of the heathen. They are moved to repentance and confession as they contemplate the Servant voluntarily "pouring out his soul unto death" for their sakes. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "By the knowledge of himself shall my righteous Servant make many righteous." How it was possible for the Servant to suffer for others is not stated. "The vicariousness," says Stevens, "is ethical. The blood of this offering is the blood of real life. If we are to use the word 'substitution,' we should say that the substitution here involved is that which takes place when one puts himself under another's burden, and from love and sympathy makes that other's suffering lot his own." [47] But there are indications that the author looked upon the

[45] Isa. 40. 2.

[46] *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah,* Chapters xl-lxvi, p. 3.

[47] *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation,* pp. 33-34.

sufferings of the Servant in a more objective way. Ritualistic conceptions are applied to him. He is compared to the sacrificial lamb (verse 7), and is spoken of as "a guilt-offering" (verse 10). He is also manifestly represented as bearing the penal consequences of the sins of others. "It is this voluntary suffering of the righteous in behalf of the unrighteous that alone satisfies the demand of Yahweh and saves the guilty from the extreme penalty of the law." [48] In taking this view the author disregards the fact that punishment to be just must be visited upon the guilty themselves. He simply accepts the traditional idea that suffering is a punishment for sin, and then interprets the sufferings of the righteous Servant as a vicarious atonement for the sins of others. The various ethical problems involved in this conception he does not raise.

The important point, however, is that we have here a distinct advance beyond the more purely moralistic conceptions of forgiveness that prevail throughout most of the prophetic literature. "If the religion of the prophets," says J. K. Mozley, "had culminated in the appeal for repentance for the past and right action for the future, we should have to look upon them as separated by an unbridgeable gulf from the ideals of the legal, priestly cultus. Where repentance and good works are all that is necessary, there may be a religion of reconciliation, but not what is generally understood by a religion of atonement." [49] Atonement implies reparation, an act of expiation, and this we have in the sufferings of the Servant. The Servant's sufferings are not, it is true, represented as essential to forgiveness;

[48] Burton and Smith, *Biblical Ideas of Atonement*, p. 36.
[49] *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 25.

but they did have the virtue of effecting within the heathen a transformation of mind and heart. And this is the essential thing in atonement. "The fundamental problem is to find a way whereby the righteous God can make righteous the ungodly; and this cannot be secured by calling or declaring them righteous, but only by a spiritual transformation." [50] This transformation, however, cannot be effected by men themselves. A divine act of grace is needed, and in Isaiah 53 this act is represented as performed through the Servant. Men can be won back to God only by self-sacrificing love. This is the thought suggested by the work of the Servant. And when this thought is carried up into the life of God himself, we have the full Christian view of forgiveness and atonement.[51]

We have thus far dealt chiefly with the prophetic teaching concerning forgiveness, and hence have said nothing concerning sacrifices as a means of atonement. It was one of the outstanding characteristics of the prophets that they denied to sacrifices any value in and of themselves. When offered as a substitute for righteousness they were worse than worthless, an abomination in the sight of God. "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies." [52] "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination

[50] B. P. Bowne, *Studies in Christianity*, p. 148.

[51] It has been customary to find the idea of the self-sacrificing love of God in Isa. 63. 9, where we read of Yahweh that "in all their afflictions he was afflicted." But this reading is due to a defective text. We should on the basis of the Septuagint read: "So he became to them a saviour *from all their distress; it was no envoy* or angel, but his own presence," etc.

[52] Amos 5. 21.

unto me." [53] "Did ye bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" [54] "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices." [55] It was the contention of the preexilic prophets that at the outset, in the classic period of Israel's religion, sacrifices had little or no place. What Yahweh then required of the Israelites was simply obedience to the moral law. And this for the prophets was normative. The sacrifices of their own time they did not regard as evil. The altar had its place in the temple.[56] But sacrifices as such had no independent value. They were like prayer, acceptable if offered in the right spirit, but otherwise worthless. They were not looked upon as in any way conditioning the divine grace. They were not means of atonement. Atonement in the common sense of the term figured, as we have seen, only incidentally in the teaching of the prophets. What they stressed was the moral conditions of forgiveness. When these conditions were met, nothing more was needed. At the same time they recognized the fact that to meet these conditions was no easy matter. To do so either the punishment of the guilty or the suffering of the righteous seemed necessary, and this left the door open to some of the profounder ideas that underlie the doctrine of the atonement.

Atonement in the Old Testament is associated chiefly with the sacrificial rites; and these, while rejected by the prophets as of no value, figured prominently in the popular and legal religion. The root-meaning of the Hebrew word for "atone" (*kipper*) was either "to cover" or

[53] Isa. 1. 13.
[54] Amos 5. 25.
[55] Jer. 7. 22.
[56] Isa. 6. 6.

"wipe out." [57] The word, however, is not used in the Old Testament in its original literal and physical meaning. It always has a metaphorical sense. As applied to sin, it means that sin has been "covered" or "wiped out" in such a way that it no longer arouses the divine wrath. When Yahweh is spoken or thought of as "covering" or "wiping out" sin, *kipper* is virtually synonymous in meaning with "forgive." It is in this sense that the word is commonly used in the prophetic and extra-ritual literature.[58] In the ritual literature it is usually the priest who is represented as doing the "covering" or "wiping out," and in this case *kipper* has about the force of "appease," "propitiate," or "atone." [59] The priest appeases the divine wrath by the offering of a sacrifice. It may also be noted that *kipper* is generally regarded as standing in a close relation to the noun *kopher*, "a ransom," that it was probably a denominative from it, and that the same general sense attaches to both words. *Kipper* consequently carries with it the idea that the appeasement aimed at is secured by compensation of some kind for the injuries or offenses committed.[60]

Sacrifice is a custom that goes back into prehistoric antiquity. How it originated we cannot say. The Priest's Code represents sacrifice in Israel as instituted by Moses under divine command, and recognizes no offering of sacrifice before that time. But this view, even if correct, would apply only to sacrifices in Israel. Sacrifice was a

[57] For an exhaustive discussion of the word and its use in the Old Testament see *Die Idee der Sühne im Alten Testament*, by Johannes Herrmann.

[58] Isa. 6. 7; 22. 14; Jer. 18. 23; Psa. 65. 3; 78. 38.

[59] Lev. 4. 20, 31; 10. 17; 16. 32.

[60] 1 Sam. 3. 14; 2 Sam. 21. 3f.; Gen. 32. 20f., J.

universal custom among the heathen. It has been held that its origin was due to a primitive revelation, but for this view there is no basis. Its universal prevalence suggests that it must in some way have been a natural expression of man's sense of relation to God.

What the original idea was that lay back of sacrifice has been the subject of much discussion. No generally accepted conclusion has as yet been reached. Four different thories may be distinguished. Of these the "gift-theory" is perhaps the one now most widely held.[61] It regards sacrifice as originally a gift offered to supernatural beings for the purpose of winning their favor and overcoming their hostility. Closely related to this is the "homage-theory." It holds that sacrifices were originally acts of worship, "the embodied prayers of men who think like children." They expressed the various feelings of dependence, reverence, thanksgiving, penitence, trust, with which men approach the higher powers. A quite different theory is that advocated by Robertson Smith, the "covenant" or "communion" theory. According to this theory sacrifice was originally a meal of fellowship in which the deity participated along with his worshipers. Just as eating at a common meal was regarded by the Arabians as binding people together, so was it with the deity in his relation to those who worshiped him. The blood poured out at the sacrificial meal to the deity cemented the union between him and his people. In this way a friendly relationship with the deity was maintained, and misfortune and divine chastisement were avoided. Yet another theory relative to the original

[61] As representatives of this theory H. Spencer, E. B. Tylor, H. Schultz, and G. F. Moore may be named. The "homage-theory" was advocated by F. D. Maurice and R. Smend.

meaning of sacrifice is the "propitiatory" or "substitutionary" theory, according to which the penalty due the sinner was inflicted on the sacrificial animal. This theory was the one commonly held in earlier Protestant theology,[62] but it is now generally agreed that it represents too advanced a stage of thought for primitive man.

These different theories may at first seem quite distinct from each other, and it may seem necessary to make a choice of some one to the exclusion of the others. But it is not improbable that there is truth in more than one of them, and that each represents a factor or motive that at an early date was associated with the custom of sacrifice. To pass from one of these motives to another was not difficult. "Let us assume," says G. B. Stevens, "the correctness of the simplest theory of sacrifice, the gift-theory. But the idea of a present to the deity is itself an act of homage or worship. The gift of what has value for the giver is made in recognition of the superior rights or claims of the divinity. And this idea of homage, in turn, would naturally deepen into the feeling of fellowship or communion. If the offered gift is regarded as sacred; if, for example, the idea obtains that there is some mysterious connection between the life of the divinity and the life or blood of the animal, then the conviction will naturally arise that in offering the animal in sacrifice the worshiper enters into communion with the Power whom he would honor. Then, again, when the sense of sin is deepened in men; when the conception of the divine holiness arises and man appreciates the moral separation between himself and the deity, it will then be natural that sacrifice should assume a more distinct reference to sin. It will become

[62] For an exposition of it see Fairbairn's *Typology*.

the means whereby sin is confessed and reconciliation with the offended divinity sought. Thus it would naturally happen that gifts which in a more naïve religious condition were merely presents, should come to be regarded as the means of a mystic communion or even as a cover or protection from the displeasure felt by the Deity toward the sins of his worshipers." [63]

What we are, however, directly concerned with is not the primitive idea that underlay sacrifice, but the idea or ideas that underlay sacrifice in Israel. Sacrifice was an inherited custom, and the ideas associated with it no doubt varied to some extent with different peoples and from age to age. Taking the Old Testament as a whole, the prevailing conception of sacrifice would seem to be that of a gift or present to God. This is the idea expressed by the two general terms applied to sacrifices and offerings, *minchah* and *qorban*. *Minchah* is used in P only of grain-offerings, but in J it is applied to Abel's sacrifice of the firstling of his flock as well as to Cain's vegetable offering,[64] and this general meaning occurs in many other passages.[65] The word was used of gifts to men as well as God.[66] *Qorban* in the later ritual literature is the regular term for sacrifice and offering of every kind.[67] It is applied to sin-offerings and trespass-offerings as well as to meal-offerings, peace-offerings, and burnt-offerings. [68] It was the general Old Testament rule that no one might appear before God without a gift.[69]

[63] *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation*, pp. 7-8.
[64] Gen. 4. 3-5.
[65] 1 Sam. 2. 17, 29; 26. 19; Isa. 1. 13; Psa. 96. 8; Zeph. 3. 10.
[66] Gen. 32. 14, E; 43. 11, J; Isa. 39. 1.
[67] Lev. 1. 2, 3; 2. 1, 5; Num. 31. 50; 7. 13.
[68] Num. 18. 9; Lev. 3. 1; 1. 10.
[69] Exod. 23. 15, E; 34. 20, J; Deut. 16. 16.

Gifts made to God were supposed to serve the same purpose as gifts to men. They might insure a continuation of the divine favor, or they might appease the divine anger if it had been aroused. In the latter case they were a means of atonement. It was in this sense that sacrifices "atoned" for sins. They were in the nature of a *kopher,* a ransom or compensation for the offenses committed.[70] It was, of course, assumed that the offering of sacrifices would be accompanied by a proper attitude of mind.[71] But this was not always the case, and in such instances sacrifices were nothing less than bribes, attempts to purchase the divine forgiveness without meeting its ethical conditions. It was for this reason that the preexilic prophets so frequently and vigorously denounced the sacrificial cultus.

Originally sacrifices were no doubt looked upon as actual food for the gods. They partook of it, enjoyed the sweet savor. Traces of this view linger in the Old Testament phraseology. We read in the earlier literature of Yahweh's smelling the offering or its sweet savor,[72] and in the later legal literature "sweet savor" is a term frequently applied to the sacrifices.[73] "Bread of God" is also a common expression.[74] The material implications of these terms were no doubt transcended at an early date in Israel,[75] but the idea that sacrifices were gifts to God still persisted.[76] As material substances sacrifices in P did not, of course, have any value for Yahweh, but as

[70] Exod. 21. 30; 1 Sam. 3. 14.
[71] 2 Sam. 24. 17, 25.
[72] Gen. 8. 21, J; 1 Sam. 26. 19.
[73] Exod. 29. 18, 41; Lev. 1. 9, 13, 17; Num. 15. 7, 14; Ezek. 20. 28.
[74] Lev. 21. 6, 8, 17, 21; 22. 25; Ezek. 44. 7.
[75] Compare Psa. 50. 13.
[76] Lev. 4. 23, 28; 5. 11.

gifts representative of the offender's attitude of mind and heart they were pleasing to him and hence significant factors in securing the remission of sins.

In early Israel there was no special atoning ritual. Any ordinary sacrifice might serve the purpose of making atonement. In the later legal literature, however, from the time of Ezekiel on, there appear two special propitiatory sacrifices, the sin-offering (*chattath*) and trespass-offering (*asham*). Atoning value was not, however, confined to these two sacrifices. The burnt-offering, peace-offering, and other oblations might serve the same end.[77] Indeed, "the great expiation for the whole people was the scapegoat; not any form of sacrifice." [78] In connection with the sin-offering and trespass-offering it should be noted that they were both quite limited in their range, the latter even more so than the former. They served as a means of atonement simply for "unwitting sins." Sins "with a high hand" were unpardonable. "The soul that doeth aught with a high hand, whether he be home-born or a sojourner, the same blasphemeth Jehovah; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of Jehovah, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him." [79] "Unwitting sins" seem, however, to have been interpreted broadly. Among the sins for which atonement might be made were such offenses as perjury, robbery, oppression, betrayal of trust, immoral relations with another man's bondmaid, and murmurings against the representatives of Yah-

[77] Lev. 1. 4; 16. 24; Ezek. 45. 15, 17.
[78] G. F. Moore in *Encyclopædia Biblica*, vol. iv, col. 4219.
[79] Num. 15. 30-31.

weh.[80] There are also one or two passages which seem to provide for the remission of all sins.[81] These apparently conflicting regulations may perhaps have come from different hands and different times. The prevailing view in the Old Testament is that only sins of inadvertence may be forgiven. The idea that certain sins are unpardonable no doubt came from an earlier period,[82] but the first explicit statement of it is found in P. The distinction between "unwitting" sins and sins "with a high hand" looks like an attempt to combine the moral seriousness of the prophets with the popular hankering after sacrifices. If sacrificial atonement availed only for unwitting sins, a place was manifestly left for the stern attitude of the prophets toward distinctly moral offenses. What the prophets condemned was sins "with a high hand," and toward them the later priests took an equally uncompromising attitude. Sacrifices had a certain value, but theoretically they offered no ground for the remission of sins committed in defiance of the divine will.

In P not only did "unwitting" sins call for atonement, but also certain natural processes or conditions of both things and persons that were regarded as unclean. The altar, for instance, needed to be purged by atoning sacrifices.[83] So also did a woman after childbirth,[84] a leper healed of his disease,[85] and a person defiled by contact with the dead.[86] In these instances the sin-offerings and trespass-offerings were manifestly simply purifying

[80] Lev. 5. 1; 6. 1-7; 19. 20f.; Num. 16. 41ff.
[81] Num. 5. 6ff.; Lev. 16. 21f.
[82] 1 Sam. 3. 14; Isa. 22. 14.
[83] Exod. 29. 36f.; Ezek. 43. 19-27.
[84] Lev. 12. 6-8.
[85] Lev. 14.
[86] Num. 6. 9-12.

agencies. They had nothing to do with the remission of sin. Their purpose was merely to render unclean things and persons clean.

But were the atoning sacrifices anything more than cleansing agencies or propitiatory gifts to God? The traditional view is that they were also and chiefly cases of penal substitution. The guilt of the sinner was transferred to the sacrificial animal, and the death of the animal was accepted as a substitute for that of the sinner.[87] In support of this view special stress is laid on the ritual of the Day of the Atonement. Here the sins of Israel are represented as placed on the head of the scapegoat who carries them away into the wilderness.[88] But the scapegoat was not sacrificed, nor was its blood sprinkled on the altar. All that we have here is an analogous rite, from which it might be inferred that the guilt of the people was thought of as transferred to the sacrificial animal (note verses 26 and 28). That this was actually the case, it is further argued, is evidenced by the rule which required the offerer[89] or the elders of the congregation[90] or the priests[91] to lay their hands upon the sacrificial victim. This rite, it is thought, was a symbolic representation of the transfer of the offerer's guilt to the victim. But this interpretation of the rite is not in harmony with the other Old Testament references to it. The general idea underlying the imposition of hands

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[87] For a defense of this view in modified form, see the article by W. P. Paterson on "Sacrifice," in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible.*

[88] Lev. 16. 20-22.

[89] Lev. 3. 2, 8, 13; 4. 4.

[90] Lev. 4. 15.

[91] Lev. 8. 14.

was that of benediction or dedication.[92] If anything was transferred, it was something good, not bad. Then, too, one would naturally expect that if the offender's sin had been transferred to the victim, the latter's flesh would be regarded as unclean; but instead we read that it was "most holy" and was eaten by the priest.[93]

Again, it is difficult to see how fine flour could serve as a sin-offering,[94] if vicarious death was the essential thing in atonement. It is also not easy on this theory to understand why the sin-offerings should be limited in their efficacy to sins of inadvertence. If we have the substitution of one life for another, we would naturally expect that capital offenses as well as others might be expiated. Further, it may be added that the emphasis in the ritual was not on the death of the victim, but on the sprinkling of the blood on the altar. "The life," we read, "of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life."[95] This is the nearest approach to a *rationale* of atonement in the Old Testament. It is the blood that is the efficacious element in sacrifice, and it is efficacious because it is the seat of life. But why the life-containing blood should atone is not explained. Its efficacy may have been regarded as due simply to arbitrary divine appointment, as Riehm contended. More probably, however, other and deeper ideas underlay the belief. A certain mystical sanctity was in ancient times attributed to the blood, and this in the thought of the day gave to it a purifying influ-

[92] Gen. 48. 14; Num. 8. 10; 27. 18, 23; Deut. 34. 9.
[93] Lev. 6. 24f.; 7. 6.
[94] Lev. 5. 11-13.
[95] Lev. 17. 11.

ence and made it a fitting symbol of the sinner's sorrow and desire for pardon. In any case, there is no suggestion that the life of the victim was looked upon as a substitute for that of the sinner.

At the same time it cannot be denied that the idea of substitution had a place in Hebrew thought. The grandsons of Saul were required to pay with their lives the penalty that ought to have fallen on Saul himself.[96] Isaac was saved from being offered up as a burnt-offering by the substitution of a ram.[97] The first-born in early Israel was redeemed by some sort of gift or offering, the nature of which is not stated;[98] and in later times the Levites were regarded as a gift to Yahweh in substitution for the first-born in Israel.[99] These, however, were none of them cases of penal substitution. The death of Saul's grandsons was in a sense vicarious, but not in the sense that it saved his life. And in the other instances there is no thought of the transference of guilt or the suffering of the innocent on behalf of the wicked.

In Deut. 21. 1-9 we do, however, have a case where an animal was apparently slain as a substitute for an unknown murderer. The slaughter in this instance was not a sacrifice according to the Deuteronomic legislators, but originally it was probably so regarded. And if the idea of substitutionary sacrifice applied in one case, it may very well have applied in others; so that it would be unwarranted to say that the idea of penal substitution was wholly foreign to the Old Testament idea of sacrifice.

But far more important than this instance is that of the

[96] 2 Sam. 21. 1-11.
[97] Gen. 22. 1-14, E.
[98] Exod. 34. 20, J.
[99] Exod. 13. 2; Num. 3. 12f., 41; 8. 16-18; 18. 15; all P.

Suffering Servant.[100] Here we have true atonement, vicarious and redemptive suffering voluntarily borne, the only instance of the kind in the Old Testament. It was this conception far more than the temple sacrifices that influenced the thought of Jesus and gave vital content to the early Christian teaching relative to his death. The sin whose forgiveness was effected by sacrificial atonement was not sin in the Christian sense of the term. It was largely submoral or nonmoral. The sin, however, for which atonement was made by the Suffering Servant and Jesus, was something inward, a state of the soul. It was a spiritual condition, which could be forgiven only by being removed. The atonement made for it was consequently necessarily a redemptive as well as a vicarious act, an act making the unrighteous righteous.

[100] Isa. 53.

CHAPTER XIV

NATIONALISM AND INDIVIDUALISM

"THERE are," says Professor Flint, "two principles in the world—the principle of authority and the principle of liberty, the principle of society and the principle of individualism." [1] These two principles have received varying emphasis at different times and among different peoples. A century and a half ago the dominant note of European civilization was individualism, and in harmony therewith went the theory that organized human life was the outcome of a social contract freely entered into by originally independent individuals. The first state of man, the so-called state of nature, was one of absolute individual freedom. Society was a later artificial product; it was second and not first. But during the past half century this judgment has been to a large extent reversed. To-day the social note is dominant. Society is first, not second. The individual is the product of society. "Society," it is said, "is the concrete reality, of which the individual is a mere abstraction." And with this general view the theory of origins has in large measure been made to conform. It is now commonly agreed that the state of nature as conceived by the eighteenth-century thinkers is a fiction. Human life was always a community life. And the farther we go back, the more marked does the solidarity of the family, clan, and other social groups become. The individual tends to lose himself in larger wholes. Society, not the individual, becomes the object of primary concern.

[1] *Philosophy of History*, p. 34.

That this new conception of primitive human life should be applied to the interpretation of the Old Testament was inevitable. The small place accorded the individual in the Hebrew Scriptures had always been a source of embarrassment to apologists. Efforts had been made by typologists and allegorists to obscure or explain away the fact, but without success. It was, then, only natural that modern scholars should see in the subordinate place assigned the individual in the Old Testament simply an illustration of the common ancient conception of social solidarity. And since it is now a generally recognized law of human history that with the advancement of civilization the individual emerges into greater prominence, it was inevitable that the attempt should be made to trace in the Old Testament the gradual development of individualism. Vatke,[2] in 1835, first pointed out the significance of Jeremiah and Ezekiel for this development. Duhm,[3] in 1875, worked out the problem in its relation to the teaching of the prophets generally. And W. Robertson Smith,[4] in 1889, powerfully reenforced the conclusions of Duhm and other Old Testament critics by his apparently well-established theory of the essentially communal character of all primitive religion, especially the Semitic.

The resulting theory concerning nationalism and individualism in the Old Testament may be briefly outlined in two or three paragraphs. Down to the time of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the exile the nation as distinguished alike from other peoples and from individual Israelites was the subject or unit of religion. But the relation of the nation to Yahweh was differently conceived by the lit-

[2] *Die Religion des Alten Testamentes*, pp. 517f., 637f.
[3] *Die Theologie der Propheten*, see pp. 95, 216f.
[4] *The Religion of the Semites.*

erary prophets, on the one hand, and their preliterary predecessors and the people in general, on the other. The preliterary prophets and their contemporaries looked upon Yahweh as bound to Israel by a natural or physical bond, a bond that could not be broken. The literary prophets, on the other hand, regarded the union between Yahweh and his people as ethically conditioned, and, therefore, as capable of being dissolved.

The individual during the preexilic period stood in no direct relation to Yahweh, except in so far as he was a representative of the nation. In the individual as such Yahweh had no interest. "Over him," as Wellhausen says, "the wheel of destiny remorselessly rolled; his part was resignation and not hope." [5] In Isaiah's doctrine of the remnant we have, it is true, the beginning of a new religious unit. But not until we come to Jeremiah do we find the clear idea of a direct personal relationship to God. Here the prophet's personality takes the place of the nation. The nation has been virtually cast off, and the prophet alone now stands in a direct relation to Yahweh. "The true Israel was narrowed to himself." [6] This special relation of Yahweh to a single individual was then universalized by Ezekiel after the fall of the nation, and applied to individuals generally. "All souls," Yahweh now says, "are mine." [7]

Thus originated religious individualism. In the heart of Jeremiah was first opened the fountain of true personal piety, and from it flowed the stream of religious lyric that made its way down through the postexilic period

[5] *History of Israel*, p. 469.

[6] Wellhausen, *History of Israel*, p. 4. See also Smend, *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte*, pp. 263f.

[7] Ezek. 18. 4.

and issued in the book of Psalms. In Ezekiel we have expressed for the first time the strict doctrine of individual responsibility. This formed the basis of much of the later Wisdom Literature, and gave rise to the problem of suffering which received its classic expression in the book of Job. Jeremiah and Ezekiel thus marked the dividing line between nationalism and individualism. In them the old order came to an end and the new order began. Before the exile Israel was a nation, after the exile a church, a congregation of devout individuals. Traces of the earlier nationalism, to be sure, lingered after the exile, but the individual was by this time firmly established as the true subject or unit of religion.

Such in brief is the view held by a large and influential group of scholars. Wellhausen, Stade, Duhm, Marti, Smend in his earlier utterances on the subject, W. Robertson Smith, G. Buchanan Gray, R. H. Charles, and many others have adopted it. Indeed, it has become so common and is so unquestioningly accepted by many that it might almost be called a dogma of modern criticism. And that it contains a large element of truth is not to be denied. But in some important regards the theory is certainly wrong, and at other points it is lacking in clearness and definiteness.

The topic is, furthermore, one of such importance that a careful critical investigation of it is necessary, if one is to have a correct conception of the religious life of the Israelites both before and after the exile.

The Nation as the Unit of Religion

It is not always clear what scholars mean by the nation when they speak of it as the unit or subject of religion.

Is it to be understood in a political or a racial sense? The former seems to be the prevailing view. W. Robertson Smith, for instance, speaks of the "whole nation in its national organization . . . as the religious unit." [8] And the stress placed on the exile as the dividing line between nationalism and individualism naturally suggests that it is the nation in a political sense that is primarily thought of. W. H. Bennett, for instance, says that "the suspension of national life left only individuals to be dealt with." [9] Furthermore, it might be argued that only a nation politically organized would be in a position to exercise in an effective way a restraining influence on the individual. Mere racial or ecclesiastical unity might perhaps furnish a sufficient basis for nationalism as opposed to universalism, but for nationalism as opposed to individualism political unity would be necessary. Only a powerful social group such as the independent state would be able to effect such a complete subordination of the individual as is implied in religious nationalism.

But if it is the nation as a political entity that was the subject of Old Testament religion, both the establishment and the fall of the monarchy must have profoundly affected the religious consciousness of the Israelites. And of this we have no evidence, at least so far as the particular point under consideration is concerned. Clan consciousness may have been stronger in the period of the Judges,[10] and individual self-consciousness in the post-exilic period, but in both periods Yahweh was thought of as standing in a unique relation to the entire people. No important difference on this point is observable between

[8] *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 20.

[9] *The Post-Exilic Prophets*, p. 243.

[10] See Wallis, *Sociological Study of the Bible*, p. 47.

the literature of these two periods, on the one hand, and that of the monarchy on the other. Throughout the whole of Israel's history it was the entire nation that was thought of as standing in covenant relation with God. It must, then, have been the racial unity of the people rather than their political organization that was uppermost in the minds of the Old Testament writers when they spoke of the bond of union between Yahweh and Israel. No doubt the term "Israel" carried a different connotation at different times and with different authors. With some the political factor was more prominent than with others, but taking the Old Testament as a whole the basal element in the term was certainly that of race or kinship.[11] And if so, the distinction between preexilic and postexilic Israel need not have been so great as is commonly supposed. We may speak of the one as a nation and the other as a church, we may call the one "secular" and the other "ecclesiastical," but the consciousness of religious solidarity was essentially the same in both. As proof of this we need only compare the prophecies, legal codes, and histories of the exilic and postexilic period with those of the preexilic age. In both groups of writings it will be found that we have practically the same conception of Israel and its relation to Yahweh.[12]

Another point that calls for consideration in this connection is the relation of the solidarity of the nation to

[11] "Religion and race," says Dr. K. Kohler in his *Jewish Theology* (pp. 6-7), "form an inseparable whole in Judaism. . . . The racial consciousness formed, and still forms, the basis of the religious community."

[12] For a convincing and almost exhaustive array of evidence on this point see *"Das Subjekt der altisraelitischen Religion,"* by E. Sellin, in *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift* for 1893, pp. 447-465.

that of the family, clan, and other smaller groups. Some scholars fail to distinguish clearly between these different kinds of solidarity. R. H. Charles, for instance, says that in early Israel "the individual was not the religious unit, but the family or tribe," and then a little later declares that "the nation was the religious unit." [13] But manifestly the nation was not identical with the family or tribe. National solidarity is clearly quite distinct from a merely tribal or family solidarity. Yet, as a matter of fact, the family as well as the nation is often treated as a moral unit in the Old Testament. Innocent relatives were punished along with the guilty persons and even instead of them. This was true of the divine procedure as well as of the human. The most conspicuous instances are perhaps those connected with the destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram,[14] the punishment of Achan,[15] the avenging of Saul's crime against the Gibeonites,[16] and the judicial murder of Naboth.[17] But these were by no means exceptions. They illustrate the common practice. This is evident not only from the many other similar instances in the Old Testament,[18] but also from the generally accepted law of blood revenge. This law not only required the Israelite to avenge the blood of a relative, but permitted him to execute that vengeance on a relative of the guilty person as well as on the guilty one himself. And in the

[13] *Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish and Christian*, pp. 58, 60.

[14] Num. 16. 27ff. JEP.

[15] Josh. 7. 16-26.

[16] 2 Sam. 21. 1-9.

[17] 1 Kings 21. 13 and 2 Kings 9. 26.

[18] See 2 Sam. 3. 29; 1 Kings 2. 33; 14. 10; 16. 3; 21. 21f.; 1 Sam. 2. 31; Deut. 22. 8; Lev. 20. 5; 2 Sam. 14. 9; Neh. 1. 6; Amos 7. 17; Jer. 18. 21; 20. 6; Gen. 20. 7, 17; 1 Sam. 22. 1-4; 25. 22; 2 Sam. 12. 10, 13; 1 Kings 11. 11ff.; 21. 29f.; Isa. 14. 21.

Decalogue[19] it is declared that Yahweh visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children even to the third and fourth generation. Moreover this custom of treating the family as a moral unit was not confined to the earlier periods of Israel's history. The very latest books of the Old Testament contain instances of it.[20] It should also be added that the solidarity of the family brought not only *suffering* upon one's relatives, but also *blessing*. They shared in the consequences of one's *good* deeds as well as one's *evil* deeds. Yahweh keeps covenant and loving-kindness with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.[21] And so it is often recorded that because of the righteousness of some good man, such as Noah,[22] Caleb,[23] Obed-Edom,[24] or David,[25] his family or a descendant was granted some special favor.

Such facts as these naturally raise the question as to the relation of the solidarity of the family to that of the nation. One might regard the latter as an extension of the former. And this was a common idea in antiquity. But we now know that nations do not arise from the growth of a single family. They are the result of the union of different tribes or peoples. And in the case of Israel we have a well-established tradition that the different Hebrew tribes were welded into national unity by the work of Moses. This unity did not become political till the time of Saul and David. But it was nevertheless from the

[19] Exod. 20. 5.
[20] Dan. 6. 24; Esth. 9. 13f.
[21] Deut. 7. 9; Exod. 20. 6.
[22] Gen. 7. 1.
[23] Deut. 1. 36.
[24] 2 Sam. 6. 11f.
[25] 1 Kings 11. 11; 2 Chron. 21. 7.

outset a true national unity, a unity founded on race and religion. Yahweh was recognized as the national God. He stood in a direct relation to the people as a whole. As over against him they formed a unity. His covenant was a covenant with them in their corporate capacity. In a word, he was God of the nation rather than of the individual tribes or families.

The suggestion has consequently been made that the solidarity of the family had originally no connection with Yahwism. It was simply a survival from pre-Yahwistic times. It had its source in the family cult, especially the cult of the dead.[26] The *numen* or *numina* originally worshiped in the family were gradually displaced by the national religion, but, after they had vanished, the family still persisted as a religious unit.[27] In this view there is probably some truth. But it hardly seems necessary to assume that the relation of Yahweh to the nation was so exclusive as to be naturally and logically inconsistent with the existence of other minor moral and religious units. Granting the principle of solidarity, it would seem only natural that it should be applied to other social groups as well as the nation. Take, for instance, the village or city. In several instances in the Old Testament the inhabitants of a city are treated as a moral unit. There is the case of Sodom and Gomorrah,[28] and that of the city of Nob.[29] Then in Deut. 13. 12-16 we have a regulation providing for the destruction of all the inhabitants of any city in which idolatry has been practiced, regardless of the fact

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[26] See Stade, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel,* vol. i, p. 507, and Löhr, *Sozialismus und Individualismus im alten Testament,* pp. 9-11.

[27] 1 Sam. 20. 6.

[28] Gen. 18-19, J.

[29] 1 Sam. 22. 19.

that some in all probability would be innocent. In such cases no real light is thrown on the fact by ascribing it to a non-Yahwistic or pre-Yahwistic source. What we have is merely an application of the principle of solidarity analogous to that in the case of the nation. Between the solidaric city or family, on the one hand, and the solidaric nation, on the other, there was no inconsistency. Neither was in an exclusive sense the subject or unit of religion.

Another point that needs to be noted is the exact sense in which the Hebrews thought of the nation as a religious unit. The general notion of solidarity as applied to the nation is clear enough. Various aspects of it appear in the Old Testament. The people are represented as so bound up with their own past that the deeds of the fathers had a moral significance for them. They suffered because of the sins of the fathers,[30] and because of the righteousness of the patriarchs were blessed.[31] The nation is also represented as sustaining such an organic relation to every member and part of it that the acts of the individual or any group of individuals had a bearing on the fortunes and the moral status of the people as a whole. It is naturally the king who is most frequently spoken of as standing in this solidaric relation to the nation.[32] The people were punished because of the sins of Manasseh and Ahaz,[33] and, on the other hand, are said to have been delivered from the Assyrian foe for David's sake.[34] But it was not only the king who stood in this relation of

[30] 2 Chron. 34. 21; 29. 6-8; Dan. 9. 16; compare Lev. 26. 39; Gen. 49. 3ff.

[31] Gen. 26. 5, 24, J; Lev. 26. 42, 45; compare Exod. 32. 13.

[32] 2 Sam. 3. 28; Gen. 20. 9, E.

[33] 2 Kings 21. 10-13; 23. 26; Jer. 15. 4; 2 Chron. 28. 19.

[34] 2 Kings 19. 34; 20. 6.

moral solidarity with the people. Individuals generally occupied the same relation. The sin of Achan brought defeat upon the army of Israel,[35] and as the reverse of this Isaiah represents himself as involved in the guilt of the nation.[36] Individuals suffered because of the sins of the people as a whole. And so also the sins of a particular class or group of men brought guilt upon the entire nation.[37] This appears to have been the standpoint of the earlier prophets; and it may be, as J. M. Powis Smith says, that this fact accounts to some extent for the intensity and passion of their denunciation of the wicked. They believed that the wicked were not only bringing destruction upon themselves but upon the whole people, good as well as bad. It would seem, then, as though the ancient Israelites looked upon the nation as a self-identical moral personality, embracing in its unity not only all existing members but also past generations.

The question, however, arises as to whether the idea of national solidarity actually existed in such a definite form as this in the minds of the Hebrews, whether it was not with them rather a vague feeling, than a clear concept. It might even be questioned whether we have not here simply a personification rather than a *personalization* of the nation. But the above facts and references seem clearly to imply that the solidarity of the nation was not with the Hebrews a mere figure of speech. There was a real sense in which they thought of the nation as a unit. The tendency of the Semitic mind to ascribe objective reality to collective terms and general conceptions, naturally led to this view. But that the Hebrews had reflected on the

[35] Josh. 7. 2-21; compare Gen. 26. 10.
[36] Isa. 6. 5.
[37] Ezra 10. 10; Josh. 22. 18.

subject at such length that they had come to think of the nation as a "corporate personality," [38] is quite improbable. Their ideas concerning the unity of the state must at the best have been vague, and only in a very general way can they have thought of its component parts, past and present, as morally interrelated. Statements were made that may seem to us to imply a highly developed conception of the nation as a moral unit and an organic whole, but it is not to be supposed that the ancient Hebrew necessarily drew from these statements the same conclusion that we to-day would.

This leads us to ask how the conception of the nation as the subject of religion related itself to the practical life, the actual consciousness of the individual Israelite. It meant, of course, that his relation to Yahweh was conditioned by the fact that he was an Israelite. But how did the nationalistic as opposed to the individualistic standpoint affect his life? Did it make him more interested than the modern man in public affairs? Did it give him a higher estimate of the value of society or the nation? Did it cause him to be more patriotic and less self-regarding? Or was his religious nationalism more or less unconscious? Was it to a considerable extent a mechanical fact rather than a deliberate devotion to the common good?

In answering this question it will be well to begin with a consideration of the current view of primitive life in general. We have already seen that according to this view the earliest social groups were characterized by a marked solidarity. The individual was almost wholly subordi-

[38] See H. Wheeler Robinson's *Christian Doctrine of Man*, pp. 8, 27ff.

nated to the family or tribe. And from this the conclusion has been drawn that men's original impulses were distinctively and predominantly social. They were directed toward the common good, the welfare of the group. The individual cared little for himself. His life was very largely absorbed in that of the clan. But this conclusion rests upon a manifest error. It assumes that primitive man interpreted the facts of his own life in the same way that we to-day would with our developed self-consciousness. This is in itself inherently improbable, and is really a case of what has been called the psychological or sociological fallacy. Professor Warner Fite has stated the case so clearly that I quote somewhat at length from him: "The primitive clan exhibits, let us say, a distinct solidarity, a clear submission of the individual will to the authority of the group. For us that would mean a conscious recognition of the paramount claims of the common good. But it need not mean this for primitive man, any more than the movements of the heavenly bodies mean for him that the earth revolves upon its axis. . . . The primitive life is a relatively unconscious life. The primitive condition of mind is not so much a clear perception of things as a vaguely mystical feeling. The primitive society is thus less a conscious relationship than a mechanical fact. No high sense of the value of social unity binds men together. They just stick together; and, relatively speaking, in much the same way as the cattle or the parts of a machine, because of the mechanical structure of the individuals and their space and time relations. The primitive individual has no very distinct consciousness of himself, and just as indistinct a consciousness of the presence and characteristics of his neighbor. He obeys the group-authority—not, however, from a recogni-

tion of value, but as the result of inherited instinct and habit. . . . For only as the individual has a meaning of his own can he attribute any meaning to the social order." [39]

The bearing of this on Israelitic nationalism is evident. Much of what is called religious nationalism in the history of the Hebrews was not self-conscious. It was simply a blind acquiescence in established custom or an equally blind patriotism. The people no doubt believed that the violation of the divine will as expressed in religious rite and social usage might bring evil upon the community, and this naturally served as an inducement to obedience. But in this no clear consciousness of the superior claims of the community or nation as such was necessarily involved. And so also with the patriotism of the Hebrews. This was stimulated by their frequent wars, and expressed itself in the ardent expectation of a glorious future for the nation. But in it all there was probably very little in the way of clear perception of the meaning and value of the state. As a means of defense against a foreign foe its function was no doubt generally understood and appreciated, but beyond this there was no clear understanding of its place in human life and very little of what could be called rational and moral devotion to it. Even to-day, as Professor Bowne says, "society is held together less by rational appreciation and moral devotion than by something analogous to the herding instinct of cattle. . . . A large part of patriotism and national feeling is only one phase of this instinct, complicated by our native pugnacity." [40] And this must have been much more the case among the ancient Hebrews, who had no regular

[39] *Individualism*, pp. 166-167.

[40] *Principles of Ethics*, pp. 127f.

system of education, and who in spite of their limited territory had far less adequate means than we of gathering and disseminating news.

It is, consequently, a mistake to attribute to the early Israelites a paramount interest in national affairs and a superior devotion to the common good. Their nationalism was largely of the instinctive or mechanical type. Not until we come to literary prophecy do we have a really serious effort to bring Israelitic nationalism to self-consciousness. Here the blind patriotism of the past and a merely mechanical conformity to rites and customs are set aside as worthless and misleading. The nation has a mission to perform, but it is a moral mission; and this mission can be performed only by resolute devotion to the will of God and the common good as expressed especially in the moral law. To bring this truth home to the minds and consciences of the people was the chief task of the eighth-century prophets. And the work they began was in its essential nature carried on by the Deuteronomists, and the exilic and postexilic prophets and lawgivers. What we have, therefore, in the history of Israel is not a gradual decline of nationalism, but an increasing consciousness of it. The nation instead of losing its religious value augments it. The clearest and noblest expressions of the religious function of the nation come from the postexilic period, and it is here also that we must look for the truest and the most intense devotion to the common good.

Thus far our discussion has brought us to several conclusions. We have seen that the nation with which Yahweh's covenant was made was not construed by the Hebrews in such an exclusively or predominantly political sense that the exile necessarily led to a sudden transition

to individualism. We have also seen that the conception of the nation as a religious unit was not inconsistent with the existence of other minor religious units, such as the family, clan, or city. It has, furthermore, been shown that the solidarity of the nation was by no means clearly conceived by the early Israelites; that, on the contrary, it was largely mechanical in character, and that the consciousness of national solidarity instead of gradually declining continued to grow in clearness of conception and depth of devotion throughout most of the Old Testament period.

The Individual as a Religious Unit

We now pass to a consideration of the place of the individual in the Old Testament, and here we begin with preexilic Israel. As previously stated, it is a common theory that "down to the sixth century no individual retribution had been looked for; . . . for Yahweh was concerned in the well-being of the nation as a whole, and not with that of its individual members. . . . Before the exile . . . the individual as such had no worth and could not approach God except through priest or prophet."[41] The fate of the individual was involved in that of the nation or the particular group to which he belonged. He had no independent significance What Tennyson said of nature,

> "So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life,"

might be applied to Yahweh's relation to Israel. He was deeply interested in the nation, but cared little for the individual. And at first sight, viewing the preexilic lit-

[41] R. N. Charles, *Religious Development Between the Old and the New Testaments*, pp. 105, 67.

erature in the large, it will have to be admitted that something can be said for this view. The preexilic literature, made up chiefly of prophecies, legal codes, and historical narratives, deals very largely with the nation, its origin, history, and destiny. Individuals, to be sure, figure prominently in the historical narratives, but they are chiefly such men as the patriarchs, Judges, kings, and prophets, whose life and work had a national significance. The individual as such receives very little attention. On the other hand, the Psalms and Wisdom Literature, in which the needs and problems of the individual find their chief expression, belong for the most part, if not exclusively, to the postexilic period. Hence the inference is natural, that nationalism was the characteristic of preexilic Israel, and individualism the characteristic of Israel after the exile.

But a more careful and detailed study of the facts involved soon makes it evident that this view is quite untenable. The preliminary presupposition in its favor, arising from a superficial survey of the history of Old Testament literature, largely vanishes when one takes into account two facts. The first has already been alluded to. It is that the prophetic, priestly, and historical literature of the postexilic period is on the whole virtually as nationalistic as is the corresponding literature of the preexilic period. It belongs to the very nature of these types of literature that they should deal chiefly with the nation. History, prophecy, and law, as then understood, were distinctly national. And the fact that they were practically as much so in the period after the exile as in that before, makes it perfectly clear that no sweeping conclusion concerning the exclusively nationalistic character of preexilic religion can justly be drawn from the fact that

the literature of this period was predominantly national. In the next place, such individualistic literature as the Psalms and Wisdom Books must have existed to some extent before the exile. Most of what has come down to us may date from a subsequent period. But that this type of literature originated in the exile or subsequently is a wholly unwarranted assumption. The only conclusion justified by the facts is that it was cultivated more extensively after than before the exile.

But in order to come to a definite conclusion concerning the question at issue, it will be necessary to examine somewhat carefully the teaching of those portions of the Old Testament which are commonly admitted to be preexilic or rather pre-Jeremianic. That there should be here some recognition of the rights and worth of the individual is *a priori* probable. We have already seen that other religious units besides the nation were recognized in ancient Israel, such as the family, clan, and city. If these were not excluded by the existing nationalism, there is certainly no reason why the individual should not at the same time have been recognized as a moral or religious unit. On the contrary, such recognition is inherently probable. For there is no necessary contradiction between the nation or society, on the one hand, and the individual, on the other. The primitive subordination of the individual to the group was, as we have seen, largely mechanical. It was akin to the herding instinct of cattle. There was no conscious recognition of the value of the group any more than there was of that of the individual. Man, to begin with, was neither social nor self-regarding. He developed into both, and both, in so far as they were facts of consciousness, tended to support each other. The individual found his value in society, and society found the

ground of its value in the individual. As the individual came to distinguish himself from the group in which he was merged, he entered at the same time into a recognition of the place and value of the group. Thus individual self-consciousness and social self-consciousness kept pace one with the other. Whatever recognition there was of the high value of the group, whether that of the family, tribe, or nation, necessarily reacted upon the consciousness of the individual, and tended to create in him a new sense of worth. And so the achievements of the individual and the recognition of his value reacted in a similar way upon the consciousness of the group, in so far as the group furnished for the individual a worthy field of activity. One group might yield in importance to another, the tribe to the nation, and the nation to society in general, but, in so far as the group concerned formed an adequate field for the thought and labor of the individual, there was no reason why the consciousness of the group and that of the individual should in any sense be mutually exclusive. And so, as we turn to the history of Israel, we will naturally expect to find the development of nationalism and individualism going hand in hand.

The religion of Israel began in a great act of national deliverance, and this fact gave to it from the outset a distinctly national cast. But Hebrew nationalism was at first only imperfectly apprehended, and in any case stood in no conflict with the claims of the individual. What the individual had to contend against in that early day was the enslaving tie which bound him to the clan or tribe. And this tie was not strengthened, but weakened by the new nationalism. The national idea tended to break up the old tribal distinctions, customs, and religious rites; and, in so far as it did this, it manifestly contributed to

the development of individual independence, instead of the reverse. Some recognition of the individual is, therefore, to be expected even in the earliest literature of the Hebrews, and certainly in the pre-Jeremianic literature taken as a whole.

Turning now to this early literature and inquiring more specifically into the status of the individual as reflected in it, we first note a number of instances in which the law of solidarity did not hold in the execution of punishment. There are the cases of Noah,[42] Lot,[43] and Caleb.[44] There is the direct statement that, when the murderers of Joash were punished, their children were not put to death with them;[45] and with this may be connected the words of David at the time when a pestilence was sweeping over Israel as a punishment for the taking of a census: "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely; but these sheep, what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me and against my father's house."[46] There is also the significant fact that the oldest body of laws in the Old Testament, the Code of the Covenant,[47] imposes penalties only upon the offenders themselves. The murderer, the idolater, the sorceress, and others were to be put to death, but nothing is said about the punishment of their families. Furthermore, there is the doctrine of the remnant which seems to have antedated literary prophecy. In the time of Elijah there were the seven thousand that

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[42] Gen. 7. 1, 22f., J.
[43] Gen. 19, J.
[44] Num. 14. 24, E.
[45] 2 Kings 14. 5-6.
[46] 2 Sam. 24. 17.
[47] Exod. 21-23.

had not bowed the knee to Baal, who were to escape the general doom.[48] And so in Amos[49] and Isaiah,[50] especially the latter, there are references to a remnant that is to be saved. It may seem strange that greater prominence is not given to this thought by the eighth-century prophets. But it should be borne in mind that the mission of these men was to the nation, not the individual, and that in the face of grave national peril the greater danger to the state inevitably, even in a period of developed individualism, tends to turn attention away from the individual. Still the mere existence of the idea of a remnant makes it clear that in the thought of these prophets the nation was not, from the religious point of view, an "undivided whole."

In so far as the individual did not share in the fate of the nation or the group to which he belonged, it was implied that a distinct law of retribution applied to him. And that this was a common idea in early Israel is fully attested. Yahweh acts as judge in the relation of individual men to each other, and rewards and punishes them according to their deeds. Not only does this underlie the legal procedure of early times,[51] it is expressed and illustrated again and again in the early historical narratives. In the trouble that arose between Abraham and Sarah over the handmaid Hagar, Sarah says, "Jehovah judge between me and thee." [52] In 1 Sam. 2. 25, in what looks like a proverbial saying, we read, "If one man sin against another, God shall judge him;" and in 2 Sam. 3. 39

[48] 1 Kings 19. 18.
[49] 5. 15.
[50] 7. 3; 10. 20ff.
[51] Compare Exod. 23. 7.
[52] Gen. 16. 5, J.

David, referring to Joab's assassination of Abner, says, "Jehovah reward the evildoer according to his wickedness." In 1 Sam. 26. 23 Yahweh, we are told, "will render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness." He rewards Abraham for his hospitality,[53] and the Hebrew midwives for their courage.[54] He punishes Nabal for his churlishness[55] and Abimelech for the murder of his brethren.[56] Repeatedly we meet the formula, "God do so and so to me, if I do or fail to do so and so," [57] and the instances in which the sufferings and misfortunes of the individual are attributed to his sins are almost numberless.[58]

The idea of individual retribution naturally carried with it the thought that the individual was also an object of the divine care. And the evidence for the existence of this belief in early Israel is equally clear and conclusive. The names given children testify to it. "Jonathan," for instance, means "Yahweh has given"; "Joshua," "Yahweh has delivered"; "Jozabad," "Yahweh has bestowed"; "Joiada," "Yahweh knows"; and so on. Only the belief in a special and individual Providence could have prompted such names. And so with the prayers and offerings of individuals. These manifestly presuppose a God who cares for the private needs of men. The servant of Abraham in his quest for a wife for his master's son,[59] Ishmael and Samson in their thirst,[60] Hanna in her bar-

[53] Gen. 18, J.
[54] Exod. 1. 21, P.
[55] 1 Sam. 25. 39.
[56] Judg. 9. 54f.
[57] Compare 1 Sam. 20. 13; 25. 22; 2 Sam. 3. 9; 2 Kings 6. 31.
[58] Compare 1 Kings 17. 18.
[59] Gen. 24. 12ff., J.
[60] Gen. 21. 15ff., E; Judg. 15. 18.

renness,[61] Hezekiah in his illness,[62] all seek the divine aid, and Yahweh hears them. It is evident from such instances as these and many others that the early Israelite felt free to bring his every need to Yahweh. From him came every blessing; deliverance from danger[63] and success in any enterprise,[64] as well as the products of the soil[65] and the fruit of the womb.[66]

In the light of the foregoing facts it is clear that the individual had an assured place in the religion of Israel long before the time of Jeremiah. The attempt, it is true, has been made to destroy or weaken the force of these facts by claiming that they relate for the most part to exceptional individuals, men who were representatives of the nation or for some reason favorites of the Deity, and that consequently no conclusion can properly be drawn from these facts concerning the religious worth of individuals in general. But while it is true that the stories, for instance, of the patriarchs fit at present into the framework of the national history, this was not originally the case. They existed, to begin with, independently of each other and of any distinct national reference. Hence "what is revealed in them as to God's relation to certain men was told of his relation to them as men first and as representatives afterwards." [67] Furthermore the effort to bring the life of every early Old Testament character into conscious relation to the nation leads necessarily to a farfetched and artificial type of interpretation.

[61] 1 Sam. 1.
[62] 2 Kings 20. 1ff.
[63] 1 Sam. 17. 37.
[64] Gen. 27. 20; 43. 23, J.
[65] 1 Kings 17. 1, 14.
[66] Gen. 30. 2, E.
[67] A. C. Welch, *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom*, p. 25.

It is not, therefore, strange that such a scholar as Smend, who had held to the older and more rigorous theory concerning the place of the individual in early Israel, later changed his view. In the second edition of his *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte* (1899) he admits that the early Israelite regarded himself as standing in a direct relation to Yahweh, but now contends that his private affairs were not brought before the Deity with the same confidence as were those of a public or national character. "For that," he says, "they were too small. The individual looked, indeed, with a certain hope toward Yahweh, but faith in him in the proper sense of the term he did not have." [68] And so Robertson Smith tells us that "in ancient religion, as it appears among the Semites, the confident assurance of divine help belongs, not to each man in his private concerns, but to the community in its public functions and public aims. . . . The gods had their favorites no doubt, for whom they were prepared to do many things that they were not bound to do; but no man could approach his god in a purely personal matter with that spirit of absolute confidence . . . characteristic of antique religions." [69] In support of this view as applied to early Israel Smend gives but one citation. He quotes the words of Hannah, "*If* thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid," [70] as though these words implied a lack of confidence on her part in her approach to Yahweh. But in Num. 21. 2, (J) substantially the same expression is put into the mouth of the whole people. Israel says, "*If* thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand."

[68] P. 103.
[69] *Religion of the Semites*, p. 266f., 263.
[70] 1 Sam. 1. 11.

We consequently conclude that, so far as any specific statement is concerned, there is no basis in the Old Testament for the line of distinction drawn by Smend and Robertson Smith between the faith of the individual and that of the nation. No doubt the individual as a rule felt a greater degree of confidence in the future of the nation than in his own future. But that he regarded the bond between Yahweh and Israel as indissoluble, as is commonly claimed, is open to serious question. The priests of Babylon ascribed the fall of their city and the triumph of Cyrus to the anger of their god, Marduk.[71] And that a similar possibility may have presented itself to the minds of the early Israelites is certainly probable. Still, national feeling was unusually strong with them, and at times the interests of the nation no doubt submerged those of the individual. But in the ordinary course of life the primary interests of men are necessarily personal and individual. This must always have been the case. And if early Hebrew religion had not ministered in some adequate way to these interests, it is doubtful if it could ever have attained to such elevation of thought and feeling as is found in the preexilic prophets. It is a mistake to suppose that the national loyalty of the individual Israelite necessarily imposed upon him the consciousness of self-renunciation. Rather did his national loyalty, in so far as it was self-conscious, contribute to his sense of personal worth. Nationalism and individualism in their higher forms, instead of being mutually antithetical, were really mutually complementary.

It is, therefore, a mistake to regard Jeremiah and Ezekiel as marking the beginning of individualism. Individ-

[71] R. W. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, p. 380.

ualism in their time had had a long history in Israel. Many causes had contributed to its development. J. M. Powis Smith[72] enumerates the following: the transition from a nomadic or seminomadic to an agricultural and commercial life, the establishment of the monarchy, the work of the preexilic sage and priest, the ethical teaching of the prophets, and also their doctrine of the remnant. Through these and other agencies the individual had gradually been coming to a clearer moral and religious self-consciousness. His sense of personal responsibility had been sharpened, his conviction of a divine retribution strengthened, and his assurance of the divine care deepened. But the relation of this growing individualism to older ideas and customs had not been made the subject of reflection. "Ancient Israel was not accustomed to reflect, and so established no dogma concerning the relation of the individual to the group."[73] As in Greece, so in Israel, individualism coexisted with various ideas and customs implying the moral solidarity of the family and nation. And for a long time there was apparently no consciousness of any conflict between these divergent ideas. Only slowly and gradually did this consciousness arise. And here it is that the significance of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, especially the latter, is to be found. Ezekiel brought out, as had not been done before, the necessary antithesis between a consistent individualism and the traditional ideas of group solidarity.

What Jeremiah's contribution to the development of individualism was, has been the subject of considerable difference of opinion. There are a number of passages

[72] *The Prophet and His Problems,* pp. 174-184.

[73] *Individualismus und Socialismus im A. T.,* by H. Gunkel in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart,* vol. iii.

in the book that bears his name, which seem to anticipate the explicit teaching of Ezekiel.[74] But all these passages have been rejected by distinguished critics either wholly or in part as later additions; and, even though this view be incorrect, as seems to me probable, since similar passages are to be found in the book of Deuteronomy,[75] it is still true that they occur only incidentally and form no essential part of the prophet's message. Some scholars have consequently fixed attention upon certain passages in which the prophet seems to emphasize the sinfulness of his contemporaries,[76] and have concluded that this was "the furthest point reached by Jeremiah in the direction of personal responsibility. . . . According to Jeremiah, each generation determined its own fate by its attitude toward Yahweh and his demands for ethical righteousness and spiritual worship, without any let or hindrance due to the rebellious deeds of previous generations." [77] But if this were really Jeremiah's thought, it would seem that he must have made the contrast between the present and the past more distinct than he has.

The true place to look for Jeremiah's contribution to individualism is in those passages where he lays bare his own inner life: his dissatisfaction with his own lot, his feeling that God had not dealt faithfully with him, his consciousness of sinfulness, and his conviction that, after all, the chief good of life is to be found in fellowship with God.[78] Here we have, it is true, no formal doctrine of individualism, but we do have individualism in con-

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[74] Jer. 31. 29f.; 3. 14-16; 12. 1ff.; 15. 1ff.; 17. 9f.; 32. 18f.
[75] Deut. 7. 10; 18. 19; 24. 16.
[76] 2. 19ff.; 3. 1ff.; 5. 1ff.; 6. 6ff.; etc.
[77] J. M. Powis Smith, *The Prophet and His Problems*, p. 191.
[78] 15. 10ff.; 17. 9ff.; 18. 18ff.; 20. 7ff.

crete living expression. The prophet constitutes a problem to himself. His own experiences, as well as the fortunes of the nation, call for explanation. God must justify himself to the consciousness of the individual as well as in the history of the people as a whole. Such was Jeremiah's feeling, and the way in which he worked out his personal problem and arrived, in spite of pain and agony of soul, at the assurance of an inner spiritual fellowship with God, became without doubt a powerful factor in promoting personal piety. In this connection may also be noted the prophet's stress on the inwardness of true religion. The new covenant was to be a covenant written in the heart,[79] and such a covenant manifestly implies a direct personal relation of the individual soul to God.

Ezekiel's contribution to the development of individualism was of a different character. It was intellectual rather than personal. It consisted in the announcement of a principle rather than in the inspiration of an example. This does not, however, mean that Ezekiel was guided by speculative interest in laying down his doctrine of individualism. His purpose was distinctly practical. The exiles of his day were haunted by the thought that they were under the ban of an evil inheritance. Their fathers had sinned, and they must needs bear the penalty; for them there was no hope. Or they regarded themselves as under the ban of their own evil past. They had themselves sinned, and hence could not hope to escape the divine wrath. It was this practical situation that led Ezekiel to lay down the principle that every individual stands in an independent relation to Yahweh, that his destiny is in no way determined by the conduct of anyone else, and that

[79] 31. 31ff.

even his own past has forged no chains about him which he cannot break.[80] The divine grace, he thus means to say, is absolute. It knows no limits. Neither heredity nor the organic relation between the past and the present offer any barrier to it.

In view of the practical purpose thus underlying it, it is not surprising that Ezekiel's doctrine of individualism is somewhat extreme and one-sided, and that he does not himself adhere consistently to it. To see that each individual must be judged by his own relation to Yahweh, and that only, was an insight of great ethical and religious significance. But in his eagerness to enforce this truth, and so to cut from under the exiles all valid ground of complaint against the divine justice, and at the same time assure them of the certainty of the divine grace, Ezekiel seems to have overlooked the undeniable fact of social solidarity and also the essential unity and continuity of the individual life. He speaks as though the act of an individual stood in no organic relation to his own past and as though the fate of an individual were actually unaffected by the conduct of others. And yet at other times he seems to conceive of the nation as a moral unit, in whose fall the righteous would perish with the wicked.[81]

This inconsistency and one-sidedness grew naturally out of the varying practical motives by which the prophet was guided. But they were also due to failure on his part to distinguish clearly between the ideal or eschatological, on the one hand, and the actual or empirical, on the other. From the former point of view the prophet's assertion of the absolute independence of the individual is fully justified. Ideal justice requires that each individual

[80] Ezek. 18; 33. 10ff.; 14. 12-20.

[81] 21. 4.

should suffer for his own sins and for them only. But in a world of heredity and social solidarity it is evident that this abstract principle is incapable of realization. In the actual world about us the innocent suffer with the guilty. The fathers eat sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge. It cannot be otherwise. Only in a better future age, where other laws prevail, can the real and the ideal be brought into harmony. And this is the view expressed in Jer. 31. 29f. But in Ezekiel the distinction between the present and the future is less clearly drawn. Here the ideal principle of justice seems at times to be applied to the present order as well as the future. And yet this is not quite Ezekiel's position. What he is interested in is not the present order as such, but the future. He is an eschatologist. He looks forward to the speedy advent of a new order. And so real to him is this new age that he judges the immediate present in the light of its advent. It is from this point of view that his apparently extreme and one-sided individualism is to be understood. In expounding it he is thinking of the coming kingdom, in which the ideal moral law prevails. There everyone is judged according to his own merits. And since this kingdom is almost at hand, its law is already to some extent applicable to men. At its arrival, death must necessarily be the lot of the wicked and life the certain reward of the righteous.

But whatever the practical purpose and eschatological ideas may have been that lay back of Ezekiel's doctrine of individualism, the actual influence of his teaching seems to have been largely independent of these considerations. In the postexilic period individual retribution was commonly accepted as a dogma valid for the normal experiences of

human life. It was inculcated without reference to the messianic hope and without reference to any concrete situation. But the point first to be noted is that Ezekiel's successors in the prophetic office do not deal with the problem that he raises. Deutero-Isaiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel, and Jonah are all nationalistic. They may distinguish somewhat more sharply than the preexilic prophets between the two classes of the righteous and the wicked in Israel,[82] and at times may also speak more directly of the redemption of individuals.[83] But on the whole they deal almost as exclusively as the earlier prophets with the nation and its future. And so it is also with the priestly successors of Ezekiel. Here and there we may observe a slightly more developed individualism,[84] but on the whole the postexilic law and priestly histories represent substantially the same standpoint as that of preexilic times. The nation in the racial sense is still a unit,[85] and the solidarity of the family is still assumed.[86]

The true successors of Ezekiel, so far as his doctrine of individualism is concerned, were the sages. But how far they were directly influenced by him is a question. They had no doubt inherited from the sages of the preexilic period an individualistic type of teaching, and conditions after the exile favored its development on a larger scale. The exile itself, while it did not create religious individualism, must have greatly stimulated it. The fall of the state did not put an end to the national hope of the Jews, but it necessarily lessened their political activity, and so

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[82] Mal. 3. 13-18; Isa. 65. 9-16.
[83] Isa. 43. 6f.; Joel 2. 28-39.
[84] For example, Num. 16. 22; Neh. 1. 5ff.
[85] Lev. 4. 13ff.
[86] Esth. 9. 13f.

left more time for consideration of the problems of the individual. Wars ceased to inflame national passion, and the interests of peace, which are the interests of the individual, became more prominent. The rise of the synagogue, with its stress on prayer and religious instruction, was also individualistic in its tendency. And contact with the more highly developed Babylonian civilization and later with Greek thought had the same general effect. These and other forces operative at the time make it clear that quite apart from Ezekiel it is possible to account for the individualism of the postexilic sages.

If the later sages were influenced by Ezekiel, they at least took their own path. The most characteristic feature of his teaching, the rejection of the older idea of moral solidarity, apparently made little if any impression upon them. They seem to have accepted the common idea that children might be punished for the sins of their parents or blessed because of their virtues.[87] And so also with the eschatological background of the prophet's teaching. For it they had no place or at least no enthusiasm. They accepted the world as it is, and tried to harmonize the facts of life with the principle of individual retribution. Difficulties necessarily arose, but these they glossed over with devices of one kind and another.

Such was the situation when the author of the book of Job appeared upon the scene. His profound mind could not rest satisfied with the easy solutions of the past. They were to him but proverbs of ashes. And yet no final solution presented itself to his own mind. The problem of suffering remained to him an unsolved mystery to the end. But while he was unable to solve the problem he

[87] Job 21. 19; Prov. 20. 7.

made a very important contribution to its solution by asserting the independence and worth of the individual in a way that had not been done before. Ezekiel had laid down the principle of individual retribution, and Job accepted it not only as morally valid, but as an ethical necessity. When it was suggested that God might punish a man by laying up his iniquity for his children, Job replied:

> "Let him recompense it unto himself, that he may know it:
> Let his own eyes see his destruction,
> And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
> For what careth he for his house after him,
> When the number of his months is cut off?" [88]

But Job differed from Ezekiel in insisting that the law of individual retribution was not observed in the existing order. The wicked often prosper while the righteous suffer. Against this view was arrayed the prevailing tradition, and the very righteousness of God seemed to rule it out. Nevertheless Job boldly advocated it. The voice of his own conscience attested its truth. And this voice he placed above the teaching of the past, above the apparent indications of Providence, and above the God of tradition himself. As against all these forces of authority Job championed the rights of the individual, and for their vindication turned with longing and budding faith to the God of his own ideal, the God demanded by the enlightened conscience of men.[89]

After such an assertion as this of the independence and worth of the individual only one step remained before

[88] Job 21. 19-21.

[89] Job 16. 20f.; 19. 25-27.

the climax of religious individualism was reached. This final step was taken before the close of the Old Testament era. The righteous Israelite was assured of life everlasting. How this belief arose need not now engage our attention. This question will be dealt with in a later chapter. For our present purpose it is sufficient to direct attention to the fact that this culmination of individualism was not attained independently of Israelitic nationalism. One of our main contentions in this chapter has been that these two tendencies in Israel were not necessarily antagonistic to each other. The fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586 did not mean the end of nationalism and the beginning of individualism. Both tendencies continued to exist thereafter and to develop. Nationalism changed to some extent its form. It became less political in its basis and more distinctly racial and ecclesiastical. But as a religious force it did not weaken. It rather grew in strength as a result of the work both of priest and prophet, until finally the highest hopes of the nation combined with those of the individual in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The eternal worth ascribed to the nation was thus also attributed to the individual, and the two were united in a final synthesis.

But this did not end the development. Israelitic nationalism had its limitations as well as its positive value. It had furnished the field for the development of a high and noble individualism, and it had given to religion a social character that religion dare not lose without losing itself. But along with this it had built up a barrier between Israel and the rest of the world, which not only denied to the heathen the rights which were his, but also made impossible the fullest development of individual character within Israel itself. Not until the solidarity of mankind

had taken the place of the solidarity of Israel, not until nationalism had yielded to universalism, not until the hope of immortality had been extended to men generally, could a fully developed religious life and a perfect religious faith arise. This end was not attained in the Old Testament, but it is nevertheless to Israelitic nationalism and individualism that we must look for the source of the Christian idea of the kingdom of God and the Christian belief in the immortal life.

CHAPTER XV

THE MESSIANIC HOPE

The word "Messianic" has a twofold meaning. It may refer either to the personal Messiah or to the Messianic age. The latter is the sense in which it is here used. By the Messianic hope we mean, therefore, not simply the expectation of a Messiah, but the broader and more inclusive belief in the coming of the kingdom of God. In this wider sense of the term the Messianic hope is about synonymous with the eschatology of the nation. It has to do with the future of the people of God and everything directly related thereto.

The Messianic idea is consequently a complex one. It embraces at least four distinct elements. Primarily, it is concerned with the *new age* and the *redemption of Israel,* but with these ideas is associated the thought of *judgment,* a judgment both upon foreign nations and upon Israel, and to this, again, is to be added the belief in *a personal Messiah.* These different elements sustain a manifest relation to each other, but the last is a less constant factor than the other three. In not a few descriptions of the future no mention is made of the Messiah. His place is taken either by Yahweh himself or by the idealized nation. Indeed, there are two notable passages, one dealing with the Suffering Servant[1] and the other with the Son of Man,[2] in which it is uncertain

[1] Isa. 53.
[2] Dan. 7. 13f.

whether an individual redeemer is referred to or ideal Israel. But while the belief in a personal Messiah was not essential to the Messianic hope of the Israelites, it did nevertheless form an important element in it, and in the later Christian Messianism became the central factor.

Concerning the origin and value of the Messianic hope there is wide difference of opinion. In recent times the tendency has been to regard it as a comparatively late development. Whatever basis it may have had in the popular religion of an earlier period, it was not, we are told, until the exile that it became a constituent element in what might be called Old Testament religion. Ezekiel was "the father of the Messianic expectation." [3] With him originated the eschatology of the Old Testament,[4] and from him went forth those influences which developed into the later apocalyptic literature. This type of thought, it is said, stands opposed to the genuinely prophetic, and represents a decline. Apocalypticism did not grow naturally out of existing conditions, as did the teaching of the prophets, but was an artificial construction. It dealt with fantastic and impossible conceptions of Israel's future glory, and was permeated with a narrow national feeling quite foreign to the stern ethical tone and judicial impartiality of the preexilic prophets. The latter were in their whole spirit opposed to apocalypticism. It is, then, impossible that they should have written the Messianic prophecies now found in their books. These prophecies belong to a later age and reflect a different state of thought, one which is for us largely obsolete. Certain features of the later Messianism may have for us an his-

[3] H. P. Smith, *The Religion of Israel*, p. 243.

[4] Wellhausen, *Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte*, pp. 152, 197; B. Stade, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments*, p. 295.

torical interest, but in its essential nature it fails to appeal to us. There is about it too much of detachment from the actual world, too little sense of reality, and too much of narrow and unethical nationalism for it to commend itself to the modern mind. We are, therefore, forced to regard it as a quite subsidiary and transitory element in the religious teaching of the Old Testament.

This view concerning the origin and character of the Messianic hope is one at present widely held.[5] But during the last few years a reaction has set in against it. It is now contended by a number of distinguished scholars[6] that the Messianic hope not only had a place in the teaching of the preexilic prophets, but that it antedated literary prophecy and is to be carried back almost to the beginning of the nation's history. This view naturally gives to the Messianic eschatology a new significance. It teaches us that Messianism was not a later and more or less superfluous addition to the real structure of Hebrew thought, but that it formed a constituent element in it. It was, throughout at least the most important part of Israel's history, the bearer of her higher hopes, the support and stimulus of her ethical idealism. The teaching of the great preexilic prophets, as well as that of the prophets and psalmists of a later period, can be fully understood

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[5] It should be added that all who hold to the late origin of the Messianic hope do not share in the low estimate of its value. See, for instance, B. Stade, *"Die messianische Hoffnung im Psalter,"* in *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche,* 1892, pp. 369-413, and R. H. Charles, *Eschatology* and *The Religious Development Between the Old and New Testaments.*

[6] H. Gressmann, *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie;* E. Sellin, *Der alttestamentliche Prophetismus;* H. Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos,* and *Ausgewählte Psalmen;* A. C. Welch, *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom.*

only in its light. Their message is raised to a higher power, if we put back of it a more or less developed eschatology.

From this it is evident that the question concerning the time when the Messianic hope originated is one of considerable importance. But before we pass to a consideration of this problem, there is another which calls for attention. It has of late been argued that the Messianic hope of the Israelites was of foreign origin. The argument rests in part on certain conceptions in Old Testament eschatology, such as the catastrophic end of the present order and the return of paradisiacal conditions, which, it is claimed, cannot have originated on Palestinian soil.[7] But a more direct and somewhat more substantial basis for the theory is furnished by certain parallels to the Messianic hope which, it is claimed, have been discovered in Babylonia and especially in Egypt. Only the Egyptian texts need here concern us. There are several papyri dating from widely different periods of Egyptian history, which describe a state of desolation and ruin, of cosmic disorder and social anarchy, followed by one of peace and prosperity introduced by a new and ideal ruler. Of these papyri there are two of special importance, the Papyrus Golenischeff,[8] as it is sometimes called, and the Admonitions of Ipuwer. The story contained in the first is supposed to date from about B. C. 2000, though it purports to come from the time of King Snefru, about B. C. 2930.

[7] For an elaborate exposition of this part of the argument, see H. Gressmann, *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie;* and for a brief criticism, Eduard König, *Geschichte der alttestamentlichen Religion,* pp. 329-337.

[8] For the text, see H. Gressmann, *Altorientalische Texte und Bilder,* pp. 204ff.

It was apparently written in glorification of Amenemhet I, the founder of the Twelfth Dynasty, and was a *vaticinium ex eventu*. This seems also to have been the case with most of the Egyptian "prophecies," if we may judge from the few and isolated fragments that have come down to us. They were not really prophecies, but were written to glorify the reigning monarch. It was a common idea among the Egyptians that the Sun-god Re was the first king of Egypt, and that his reign was the golden age of the world. It became, therefore, natural for courtiers to speak of the kings of their own day as sons of Re. It is this idea that underlies the prediction recorded in the Papyrus Westcar, a document coming from the eighteenth century B. C., in which a divine paternity is ascribed to the founders of the Fifth Dynasty. A somewhat different conception, however, appears in the Admonitions of Ipuwer, dating from about B. C. 1300.[9] This sage condemns the reigning king as the source of the grievous evils of his time, and then by way of contrast describes the ideal king, as represented by the Sun-God Re. "He is the shepherd of all men. There is no evil in his heart." We have here no distinct prediction that the ideal king will come, but the hope that he would is at least expressed. "Where," says Ipuwer, "is he to-day? Doth he sleep perchance? Behold his might is not seen."

On the basis of these texts, especially the last, it is confidently asserted that the Messianic hope of the Hebrews was derived from the Egyptians.[10] We have, it is said,

[9] See Alan H. Gardiner, *The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage;* and J. H. Breasted's *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 203-216.

[10] See Eduard Meyer, *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme*, pp. 451-455.

in the prophecies of both peoples the same general form of threat and promise, the same idea of a perfect ruler, and the same conception of the return of paradise. A point that Gressmann especially emphasizes is the fact that the idea of a Messianic King does not harmonize, as it would if it were of native origin, with the Israelitic conception of the paradise of the past. Israel knows nothing of a primeval paradise-king. Her monarchy was of too recent origin to make possible such a view. This view, says Gressmann, "must have its source among a people whose kingdom is rooted in the oldest times, even out of mind, who cannot at all imagine a life without a king and for whom it is necessary to think of the first man as the first king." [11] This was the case in Egypt. It is consequently there that we must look for the origin of the idea of a paradise-king both of the past and the future. And it is to this same source that we must trace the deification of the Messiah, the representation of him as Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. This idea cannot have had its origin among the Israelites, but must have come from a people like the Egyptians, "who were accustomed to elevate their kings into the god's sphere and who made no great difference between a king and a god." But ingenious as this derivation of the Messianic hope is, it can hardly be said to be convincing. It is quite possible, as Breasted says, that "the pamphlets of Ipuwer and the men of his class" may somehow have "entered Palestine and suggested to the idealists of Israel the conception of the righteous king and redeemer." Or it may be, as Gressmann holds, that the Canaanites, under Egyptian influence, came to think of Melchizedek as their

[11] "The Sources of Israel's Messianic Hope," in *American Journal of Theology*, 1913, p. 188.

Messianic king,[12] and that what they expected of him was later transferred by the Hebrews to David. But these theories at the best represent mere possibilities, and neither is necessary to account for the origin of the Messianic hope of the Israelites.

This hope in a primitive form is one that we should expect to arise among different peoples. It has its manifest psychological roots. It grows out of the native discontent of the human mind with existing conditions and out of the natural tendency of men to idealize what is distant in time. It was in this way that the widespread belief in a golden age of the past arose, and the corresponding view of the future would naturally originate in the same manner. There is no need to suppose that all expectations of a glorious future emanated from one source. They may have arisen independently in different lands, and then, as they developed, have to some extent influenced each other. In this way the Messianic hope of the Israelites may have received various accretions from parallel developments in Egypt, Babylonia, and other countries. But what was thus borrowed was not the hope itself. The invincible optimism that lay back of Israel's Messianism could not have been borrowed. It was a native growth. And so also with those great conceptions that give permanent value to Old Testament eschatology —the idea of a divine world-plan, of a universal moral government, and of the coming of the kingdom of God. These conceptions are the unique creation of Israelitic genius. Nowhere else do we find anything comparable to them either in range or intensity, in moral earnestness or spiritual power. They have no parallels in any other land.

[12] Gen. 14; Psa. 110. 4.

We turn now to the question as to when the Messianic hope took its rise in Israel. Was it a late development, or did it have a place in the teaching of the eighth-century prophets, and even before their time? In considering this question it will be well to treat the different elements in the Messianic hope separately, and also to discuss the development of each idea along with the question of its origin. The Messianic hope embraces, as we have seen, in addition to the general thought of a new age, the idea of judgment, of redemption, and of the Messiah. The character of the new age may naturally be discussed in connection with the idea of redemption. So we have three main lines of inquiry to pursue.

We begin with the idea of judgment. It is a common opinion that it was Amos who first announced an approaching day of doom. There was current in his time a belief in the day of Yahweh,[13] a day on which Yahweh would manifest himself in some marvelous way; and to this belief Amos attached himself. But his conception of the day was almost the direct reverse of that current among the people. According to their view, it contained no threat of doom to Israel, but was to be for her a day of triumph. This belief, it is said, grew up out of the evil conditions which followed the division of the monarchy.[14] Such conditions the people felt could not permanently continue; Yahweh *must* intervene on their behalf. And so they began to look forward to a day of Yahweh, "a great day of battle on which Yahweh would place himself at the head of the armies of Israel and lead them on to overwhelming victory over all their en-

[13] Amos 5. 18.

[14] B. Stade, *Biblische Theologie*, p. 213.

emies."[15] The expected day was thus to be to them a day of light; only to their enemies was it to be a day of darkness. But this comfortable hope Amos rudely set aside. The day of Yahweh he declared was to be not a day of national exaltation, but a day of divine judgment. Israel's enemies would, indeed, be overthrown on that day; but their overthrow would be due, not to their hostility to Israel, but to their violations of the moral law. And for this very reason it was certain that the day of Yahweh would be to Israel also a day of doom. The divine justice would be meted out to her as well as to her enemies. Her territory as well as that of her neighbors would be overrun by the Assyrians.

Such, it is claimed, was the day of judgment, as it was first conceived in Israel. It was local and historical, an impending political calamity. Yet from it developed the later eschatological conception. The most important step in this direction was taken by Zephaniah a little over a century after the time of Amos. He represented the impending doom as universal and apocalyptic.[16] It was not to consist simply in a foreign invasion, but was to be a terrible world catastrophe, in which not only all men but even the fish of the sea and the birds of the air were to be involved. This idea was developed further by Ezekiel and the later apocalyptists, but in its essential nature it remained practically the same down to New Testament times. There was to be a great day of Yahweh at which all his enemies were to be finally overthrown.

This view concerning the origin of the idea of a coming judgment is widely held, but weighty considerations

[15] J. M. P. Smith, "The Day of Yahweh," in *American Journal of Theology*, 1901, p. 512.

[16] 1. 14-18; 3. 8.

may be urged against it. For one thing it is highly improbable that the world-wide character of the impending doom was first conceived by Zephaniah. So great an advance step could hardly have been taken by a man such as he, who in no other regard betrays any capacity for constructive thought. Furthermore, if the idea had been original with him, he would naturally have presented it in a concrete form as, for instance, a world-wide flood or fire. But as a matter of fact he conceives it vaguely and indistinctly. Figures of war, of a solar eclipse, and of a great consuming fire mingle together in his book in a way that makes it plain that he had no clear conception of the exact nature of the coming doom. Nor does he give any reason for its universality such as we would expect if the idea had originated with him. Evidently, he was dealing with traditional material.

This conclusion is confirmed when we examine carefully the utterances of the eighth-century prophets. It is a mistake to suppose that these men represent the approaching judgment as simply local and historical in character, as a calamity brought on by an invading army. Their conception of the day of Yahweh was essentially the same as that of Zephaniah. There is in it the same indefiniteness as to the form that the impending judgment will take. War and captivity are spoken of, but so also are an earthquake,[17] an eclipse,[18] a pestilence,[19] a devouring fire,[20] and an "overflowing scourge," [21] whatever that may be. There is also in the eighth-century prophets

[17] Amos 2. 13-16; 8. 8.
[18] 8. 9.
[19] 6. 9f.
[20] 1. 4, 7, etc.; 7. 4.
[21] Isa. 28. 15.

the same idea of the universality of the doom. The figure of the eclipse implies it. Then, too, there are more definite statements. In Isaiah[22] we read of a "day of Jehovah upon all that is proud and haughty, and all that is lifted up," and Hosea[23] tells us of a calamity in which the fishes of the sea are to be taken away as well as the beasts of the field and the inhabitants of the land. The doom pronounced by Amos and Isaiah upon foreign nations is also best explained by their belief in a world-catastrophe.

But this idea did not originate even with the eighth-century prophets. It was traditional with them as well as with Zephaniah. This is clear from the incidental and indefinite way in which they refer to it, and also from the fact that the designation of it as the day of Yahweh was current among the people, and evidently had been for some time. It was the common idea that in the approaching catastrophe Israel would escape. But this conviction was apparently not so strong and universal as to leave the people altogether free from misgivings. Amos tells us that there were those in his day "who put far away the evil day," [24] and to those who longed for the day of Yahweh he spoke in a way that suggests that they too knew that there was ground for the view that the day was one to be dreaded rather than desired. "Shall not," he says, "the day of Jehovah be darkness, and not light; even very dark, and no brightness in it?" [25] The idea of a remnant found in Amos and Isaiah, and current before their time, also points in the same direction. In the approaching catastrophe some would be saved, but not all. The pre-

[22] 2. 12.
[23] Hos. 4. 3.
[24] 6. 3.
[25] 5. 20.

prophetic outlook into the future was not, therefore, one of unmixed optimism. There were those who, like Micaiah and Elijah, occasionally predicted evil for Israel,[26] and this Jeremiah declared was characteristic of the true prophets generally before his time. How far back the idea of a day of doom went we do not know. It may have had its ultimate source, as Gressmann holds, in mythological ideas concerning the end of the world. But in the form in which it appeared in Israel it must from the beginning have been connected with the idea of the unlimited supremacy of Yahweh. This supremacy had not as yet been asserted, but some day it would be. In a great day of doom, such as people from of old had talked about, Yahweh would manifest his power, and the privileged position of Israel would be made clear to all the world.

The conclusion, then, to which we come is that the idea of a world-catastrophe must be carried back into the pre-prophetic period and that it must be regarded as having formed the background of the earliest group of literary prophets as well as those of a later date. This idea even in its simplest form was one of profound religious significance. It stood, as A. C. Welch says, "for the truth that the world was one and was governed by one purpose. It stood for the possibility of the emergence of the eternal order within the world of time." The early Israelites who accepted it "had learned to conceive of God as spiritual in the sense that he was not contained in, but was above, the world and all it held." What Amos did was to give to the conception a more distinctly ethical character. "Because of his knowledge of the nature of Yahweh, the emergence of the eternal order within the sphere

[26] 1 Kings 18. 17f.; 22. 8, 17.

of time meant to him the revelation of the moral order of the universe. To those who listened to him he declared not only that Yahweh was about to arise speedily, but why he was to intervene. He was about to assert the moral basis of everything, and when that manifested itself, it meant ruin to the world of things which Amos knew." [27] This truth, so admirably expressed by Dr. Welch, has been to a large extent overlooked in recent study of the early prophets. The tendency has been to explain all their utterances from the psychological and historical points of view, blind to the fact that the purely empirical and historical could never have borne the weight of the religious faith which these men possessed. The prophets illustrated their faith by a pronouncement of doom upon things round about them. But their vision was never limited to what they saw. They viewed all things *sub specie æternitatis.*

The conception which the early prophets had of the future judgment was, as we have seen, rather vague and indefinite. It was to be universal, but how it was to be carried out was not a subject on which they reflected. Their interests were practical. What they were concerned about was to point out the causes of the impending doom, and to insist on its divine source and certainty. In later times the idea arose that the expected catastrophe would not only be universal, but would involve the destruction of the world. The heavens would be rolled together as a scroll, and the earth wax old as a garment,[28] after which new heavens and a new earth would be created.[29] But how this idea of the end of the world was re-

[27] *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom,* pp. 71, 72, 73.
[28] Isa. 34. 4; 51. 6; Psa. 102. 25f.
[29] Isa. 65. 17; 66. 22.

lated to the Messianic age is not clear. Whether it was to precede or follow the new era is not stated.

Another feature of the later eschatology that may be mentioned is its conception of the fate of the heathen. The ethical principle laid down by the earlier prophets was that all powers hostile to Yahweh should be destroyed in the day of doom. But how this principle would be applied to the actual conditions of life was by no means clear. To those who were narrowly nationalistic it would mean the destruction of the entire heathen world. To others, who laid more stress on individual piety and who were broader in their sympathies, it would mean that the heathen world would be treated in the day of judgment in substantially the same way as Israel itself.[30] A certain precedence might be given to Israel, but the line of cleavage between the redeemed and those doomed to destruction would be drawn not *between* Israel and the heathen world but *through* both. And as a matter of fact these two views both receive expression in the Old Testament, though the first cannot but seem to us unduly prominent. One of the least attractive features in the Old Testament is the unsympathetic and bitter feeling which it frequently displays toward the heathen.

But the idea of judgment, prominent as it is in Israel's sacred literature, was never the final word of her seers. It was simply the foil to the hope of redemption and the new age. This hope, it is commonly admitted, can be traced back into the preprophetic period. It was implied in the popular conception of the day of Yahweh. But as to the origin and content of the day of Yahweh there is, as we have seen, considerable difference of opinion. Ac-

[30] See Jer. 12. 14-17; 48. 46f.; 49. 5f.; Isa. 19. 20-22.

cording to the view most widely held it grew up out of the weakness and suffering that resulted from the division of the monarchy, and consisted in the hope of a better future for the nation after a great and glorious victory over its enemies. This psychological derivation of the idea is not in itself improbable. But it may be remarked that it is also psychologically conceivable that the idea had its origin in the national aspiration and growing consciousness of strength which characterized the Hebrews before the division of the monarchy. In recent times a great and growing nation has, according to common belief, had much to say of "the day" when it would settle accounts with all its rivals. And it is not impossible that such a hope originated with the ancient Hebrews under similar circumstances, and then was only made all the more intense by the defeats and disappointments of subsequent centuries. The day of Yahweh was not, however, as we have seen, confined to the idea of military victory. It was a broader conception. It looked forward to a marvelous intervention on the part of Yahweh in the cosmic as well as the human world. This intervention, according to the popular belief, was to be universal in its extent and would involve more or less of peril to all peoples, but, as far as Israel was concerned, it was certain to result in her exaltation. The chosen people would escape in the day of divine visitation, and thereafter be ushered into a new era comparable in peace and prosperity to the paradise of the past.

But what was the attitude of the preexilic prophets to this popular belief? If we accept the testimony of their books in the form in which they have come down to us, there can be no doubt about the answer. They accepted the traditional Messianic hope in a modified form. Israel

was not to escape the impending doom. She was to suffer all its terrors. But after it was over and the nation had been purified, she was to enjoy a glorious future. Such is the manifest teaching of the early prophetic books in their present form. But of late it has become the fashion to insist that such a combination of threat and promise on the part of the preexilic prophets is psychologically unintelligible. These men, it is maintained, were heralds of doom, and for them to have uttered such messages of hope as we find in their books would have been to turn the edge of all their threats. A man cannot both threaten and promise at the same time. At least, if he does, he must establish some connection between the two. But in the prophetic books this connection is usually lacking. Unconditional promises stand side by side with equally unconditional threats. That this should originally have been the case is incredible. We must then hold that most, if not all, of the Messianic passages attributed to the preexilic prophets[31] were the work of later hands, who sought in this way to relieve the severity of the earlier prophetic utterances.

But this view, widespread as it is, rests on inadequate grounds. It assumes that the prophetic books are made up of connected discourses, and that these discourses were originally arranged by the prophets themselves in a logical or chronological order. This, however, is a mistake. The utterances of the prophets were not sermons in the ordinary sense of the term, but detached oracles or poems, usually brief, consisting of only a few lines. Originally they were independent of each other, and we do not know that they were grouped together in any

[31] For example, Amos 9. 8ff.; Hos. 2. 14ff.; 14. 1ff.; Isa. 2. 1-5; 4. 2-6; 9. 1-6; 11. 1-10; Mic. 4-5; Zeph. 3. 8ff.; Jer. 30; 31. 23ff.

particular way and published by the prophets themselves. Their arrangement and publication may quite as well have been due to their disciples. In any case the present conjunction of threats and promises is arbitrary. It does not mean that the prophets predicted doom and blessing at the same time. These different types of oracles grew out of different situations and different moods, and originally had no connection with each other. The recognition of this fact alone disposes of most of the arguments against the authenticity of the Messianic passages in the early prophetic books. The linguistic objections are most of them afterthoughts and not especially significant. It may also be noted that no one questions the fact that Isaiah believed in the salvation of a remnant. And if this limited acknowledgment of the divine grace coexisted in his case with a complete denial of it, there is certainly no good reason why we may not also credit him and other preexilic prophets "with being the authors of the promises or Messianic hopes, which have no limit at all." The sharp antithesis which some have sought to establish between the prophetic message of doom and the Messianic hope has, it may be admitted, a certain basis in logic. But such antitheses belong for the most part to the realm of the abstract. In the real world what we usually find is compromise; the principle that obtains is not Either-Or but Both-And.

We conclude, therefore, that the preexilic prophets shared to some extent in the Messianic hope of their day. They gave to it a more distinctly ethical character than had been done before, declaring that its realization was dependent on repentance and moral regeneration. They made righteousness the essential characteristic of the new kingdom, and insisted that before its establish-

ment Israel would be visited by a terrible divine judgment. But in other respects they shared in the common view that there was to be a glorious future for the chosen people. This future was not to consist simply in the redemption of Israel from captivity, but in a marvelous transformation of the entire world. War was to cease. All the peoples of the world were to be united together under the spiritual leadership of Israel.[32] And not only was there to be peace among men. There was to be a covenant also "with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground." [33] "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. . . . The sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den." [34] The inanimate world also is to be changed. The soil is to become supernaturally productive. "The plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." [35]

This anticipated transformation of nature is not to be understood in a purely figurative sense. It was a real change to which the prophets looked forward. And underlying this expectation there is a profound truth. "In the divine plan," as Professor Bowne says, "nature is adjusted to man quite as much as man is adjusted to nature. Each is in a way the counterpart of the other, and hence it is permitted to say that if human society should pass into higher spiritual development so that it

[32] Isa. 2. 2-4.
[33] Hos. 2. 18.
[34] Isa. 11. 6, 8.
[35] Amos 9. 13.

could be trusted with greater powers and opportunities, the environment would change to correspond. The larger spiritual life would have a better and fairer physical setting, and nature would become the more pliant instrument and effective servant of humanity."[36] But while this truth underlay the prophetic hope, there is one important regard in which the thought of the prophets differs from ours. We look for an eternal kingdom beyond the limits of time and sense. But not so the ancient seers. They thought of the kingdom of God "as coming to fruition within time and on the earth." They looked for the "emergence of eternity in the sphere of time." And "in order that this might be, there was need for a supreme intervention of Yahweh: the divine kingdom must be set up through God's direct action, and could only endure through God's presence."[37]

As to the extent to which nature would be affected by this divine intervention there are different representations in the Old Testament. The most advanced is the one that looks forward to the complete end of the present order and the creation of new heavens and a new earth.[38] But the most important thing about the new age was not the change in the outward conditions of life. This change was to be real, but its primary significance did not lie in the new sense-satisfactions which it would bring. In its essential nature the outward change was after all but a symbol of an inward spiritual change. This is a fact that needs to be borne in mind in estimating what has been termed the eudemonism of the Old Testament as a whole. The natural blessings of life had for the Old Testament

[36] *The Essence of Religion*, pp. 256f.
[37] A. C. Welch, *The Religion of Israel Under the Kingdom*, p. 184.
[38] Isa. 65. 17; 66. 22.

saint a kind of sacramental quality. They symbolized the favor and presence of God. And so with the outward glory of the Messianic kingdom. It was but a sign and pledge of the new spiritual relationship into which God had entered with his people. No profounder conception of this new relationship is anywhere to be found in the Old Testament than in Jeremiah's description of the new covenant to be established with the house of Israel. "I will put my law," says Yahweh, "in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more." [39]

This new covenant was to be made with the Israelites, but its influence was not to be restricted to them. The narrow nationalists were naturally inclined to exclude the heathen from its benefits; and the Old Testament is by no means free from this spirit. But there were broader-minded men. Deutero-Isaiah looked for the salvation of the ends of the earth,[40] and so in the Psalms we read, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto Jehovah." [41] He is "the confidence of all the ends of the earth." [42] But perhaps the most remarkable expression of this universalism is to be found in Isa. 19. 23-25. Here not even a primacy is accorded Israel in the final state of redemption. "In that day shall Israel be

[39] Jer. 31. 33f.
[40] 45. 22, 23.
[41] 22. 27.
[42] 65. 5.

the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

Having discussed the origin and development of the ideas of judgment and redemption, we pass now to a consideration of the third factor in the Messianic hope, the expectation of a Messiah. The coming of the new kingdom was not dependent upon the appearance of an ideal king. It might be brought about by the intervention of Yahweh alone. And this is the prevailing Old Testament view. But in a number of striking and significant passages the Messianic hope is made to center in the Messiah. And the fact that this is the case with the New Testament as a whole, lends special interest to these passages and also to the question as to the origin and history of the conception contained in them.

In taking up this question we are confronted with the same diversity of opinion that we have met in our study of the Old Testament ideas of judgment and redemption. Some tell us that the belief in the coming of the Messiah could not have originated until the breach between prophecy and the royal rule in Judah had become so wide that it could not be bridged over. This state of affairs was brought about by the refusal of Ahaz to heed the word of Isaiah when the two men met at the end of the conduit of the upper pool outside of Jerusalem at the time of the Syro-Ephraimitic war. It was in that connection that the Immanuel prophecy was uttered. So Kittel, referring to this incident, says, "The hour in which Isaiah parted from Ahaz gave to the world the thought of the Messiah." [43]

[43] *History of the Hebrews,* vol. ii, p. 346.

Others again are very sure that this idea did not arise until after the fall of the Davidic dynasty. Not until the Jews were without a king did they begin to long for the return of David and the establishment of the Messianic kingdom. For the earliest expression of this belief we may, therefore, not go farther back than Ezekiel, and perhaps we should come down as late as the time of Haggai and Zechariah. But this view implies that the Messianic passages in Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah were not authentic. And this is a conclusion which we have already seen there are good grounds for rejecting. Here it need only be added that the expectation of David's return would more naturally have arisen shortly after his death, when his memory was still fresh, than centuries later. In Germany it was seriously believed for a century after the death of Frederick II that he was still alive and that he would return and restore to the empire the golden age of peace. Similar beliefs also sprang up after the death of Nebuchadrezzar, Nero, Charlemagne, Frederic Barbarossa, and others.[44] And it is not improbable that the belief in the Davidic Messiah originated in the same way. In later times what was expected, it is true, was not so much a return of David himself as the appearance of a descendant or even a succession of descendants who would restore the glories of the Davidic reign. But this later expectation is best explained as a modification of an earlier belief in the actual return of David himself.[45] In either form, however, the belief would most naturally have arisen not long after the time of David. And if so,

[44] See J. P. Peters, *The Religion of the Hebrews*, pp. 427-429, and H. Gressmann, *"Der Messiasglaube in der Geschichte der Völker,"* in *Deutsche Rundschau*, 1914, pp. 412ff.

[45] Hos. 3. 5; Jer. 30. 9; Ezek. 34. 23f.

it is quite as easy to believe that it found a place in the prophecies of Isaiah as in those of Ezekiel a century and a half later.

But the expectation of a Messiah did not owe its origin to David. His remarkable career led men to attach the Messianic hope to him or to his dynasty, so that his name became the symbol of the Messianic King. But the Messianic kingship itself remained detachable from him and even from his dynasty. Haggai and Zechariah expected that Zerubbabel would prove to be the Messiah. In the second century B. C. the descent of the Messianic King was traced not to Judah, the tribe of David, but to Levi, the tribe of the Maccabees.[46] And in the famous Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah the Messianic hope is turned directly against the Davidic dynasty. The name of the expected Messiah, Immanuel, means "God-with-*us*," that is, God with Isaiah and his followers as against Ahaz and the royal house. Furthermore, it should be noted that the descriptions of the Messiah and the Messianic era in Isaiah and Micah are such as cannot have been inspired by David alone. Divine predicates are used of him, his rule is said to be without limit, and his birth is apparently thought of as attended by some remarkable portent.[47] Such ideas cannot have been suggested simply by reflection on the career of David. They probably had their source in a popular Messianic belief that was originally independent of him.

When and how this popular expectation of a Messiah arose we do not know. It is sometimes said that such a hope would have been unintelligible before the time of

[46] R. H. Charles, *Religious Development Between the Old and the New Testaments*, pp. 56, 80.

[47] Isa. 7. 14; Mic. 5. 3.

Saul and David. But this presupposes on the part of the pre-monarchic Israelites a degree of ignorance of the outside world which, to say the least, is improbable. It is possible that the belief in a Messianic King was adopted from the Canaanites and that it originally had some connection with the idea of the return of the Paradise-king. But anything like certainty is here out of the question. The earliest reference to the Messiah is probably that found in the Blessing of Jacob,[48] a passage that may date from the time of David. We read here of the coming of Shiloh. Unfortunately, there is some doubt as to the correctness of the text. Perhaps we should read instead of Shiloh "his king" or "he whose it is." But in any case the reference seems clearly to be to the Messiah. To him the obedience of the peoples is to be. He is to ride upon an ass, but the ass in this case is not a symbol of meekness, as in the late Messianic prophecy found in Zech. 9. 9f., but a sign of royal dignity.[49] The coming of the Messiah will bring to the land of Judah paradisaical fruitfulness, but it will also mean the end of her dynasty. David and his house will continue to rule only until the Messianic King comes. This, however, is evidently thought of as belonging to the distant future.

There are other early passages in the Old Testament, such as Num. 24. 17ff. (J) and Deut. 33. 13ff. (E), which may possibly refer to the Messianic hope, but they in any case add nothing of importance to our knowledge concerning it. How widely the belief in a Messiah was current in preprophetic Israel we do not know, nor do we know to what extent it affected the thought of the religious leaders. But to it in any case the literary prophets

[48] Gen. 49. 10-12, J.

[49] Compare Judg. 10. 4; 2 Sam. 19. 26.

attached their message. Isaiah declared that the expected Messiah would come, but, contrary to the common expectation, would come soon, and when he came would establish forever the righteous rule of God in the world. "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins." [50] And according to Jeremiah the Messiah was to bear the name "Jehovah our righteousness," [51] by which the prophet meant not only that the Messiah was to introduce the ideal righteousness of the divine rule, but that he was to be the means by which the individual members of the new kingdom would be made righteous.

Noble, however, and lofty as is this conception of the ideal king, it was not here that the prophetic hope received its highest expression. For that we must turn to the figure of the Suffering Servant. On petty etymological grounds it has been argued that the Servant was not the Messiah and that he sustained no relation to Israel's Messianic hope. But with objections of this kind we need not concern ourselves. Nor is it a matter of any special importance whether the Servant be understood in an individual or collective sense. It suffices for our present purpose that he was regarded as the agent through whom the divine salvation was to be wrought in the world. And in the picture presented of him we have the sublime thought that the redemption of men was to be effected not by the exercise of force, but by vicarious suffering. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." [52]

[50] Isa. 11. 5.
[51] Jer. 23. 6.
[52] Isa. 53. 5.

There is yet another stage in the development of the Messianic teaching of the Old Testament. This is represented by the Son of Man or "one like unto a son of man," who, according to the book of Daniel,[53] was to come with the clouds of heaven, and to whom universal and everlasting dominion was to be given. Here also the question arises as to whether we have an individual or collective conception. Does the "one like unto a son of man" mean "the glorified and ideal people of Israel," "the saints of the Most High," or does it mean a heavenly angelic being? The former view is suggested by the context (verses 18, 22, 27), and is the common one. But this can hardly have been the original meaning of the term. The expression, "came with the clouds of heaven," does not fit in well with the collective interpretation. To say that this means "that Israel, as the people of Yahweh, had a heavenly origin," [54] and that "it was kept in the special care of God until such time as he should see fit to bring it to its own," is at least somewhat forced. What we have in the idea of the Son of Man, and also in that of the Suffering Servant, is probably an originally individual conception, which was later applied to ideal Israel. In Deutero-Isaiah the sufferings of Israel are declared to be those of the Messianic Redeemer, the Servant of Yahweh, through whom the world's redemption is to be wrought. And in Daniel the judicial office and the world-rule of the heavenly Messiah, the Son of Man, are transferred to the glorified and ideal people of Israel. But this collective application of the terms does not deprive them of their Messianic significance. The nation simply takes over the functions of the Messiah. And in the case of the

[53] 7. 13f.

[54] H. P. Smith, *Religion of Israel*, p. 303.

"Son of Man" the individual interpretation was revived soon after the time of Daniel and became the common one.[55] It was this conception and that of the Suffering Servant which most profoundly influenced Jesus' conception of his own mission and destiny. He combined the two ideas, and "herein," says Muirhead, "we touch at once the depth and height of his originality." [56]

We may thus distinguish three stages in the development of the Old Testament idea of the Messiah: the ideal King, the Suffering Servant, and the Son of Man. Each grew to some extent out of the conditions of the time in which it originated. The ideal King was an expression of the strength and confidence of the nation in its youth; the Suffering Servant was the counterpart of the afflicted people of the exile; and the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven fit in with the transcendental and apocalyptic type of thought current toward the close of the Old Testament period. In these conceptions of the Messiah some of the highest and sublimest thoughts of the prophets were embodied. Yet back of them or, rather, involved in them, was, as we have seen, the broader and even more significant conception of the coming of the kingdom of God. This idea was the most striking and characteristic feature of Israel's religion. It is not only found in the Prophets, but pervades the Psalms, and formed the background of Hebrew thought during the whole of its creative period.

The expectation of a new age stands in marked contrast to the ancient Oriental belief in a series of world-cycles. According to this belief, the world would pass

[55] See Book of Enoch, chapters xxxvii-lxxi.

[56] *Eschatology of Jesus*, p. 203.

through a certain course, would culminate in a great catastrophe, and then return to its previous condition, run the same course, and end again in the same catastrophe. This was to continue indefinitely. There was to be no permanent progress. "That which hath been is that which shall be; and that which hath been done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." [57] This conception was current among the Babylonians and Persians, is found in Greece and Rome, and appears also in the "prophetic" texts of the Egyptians.[58] By way of contrast with it the Messianic hope of the Hebrews introduced the idea of development. When the great cataclysm should come there would be no reversion to the previous order of things. A new eternal kingdom of God would emerge. There would be a step forward, an advance. "This thought," says A. C. Welch, "of how the world was an organism, with its inevitable higher view of history, was one great contribution of the Hebrew to the world's thought. . . . Even Greek thought never broke away from the Eastern conception of the world-cycles until it had been fertilized by the infusion of this Hebrew contribution." [59]

Now, in the idea of development there is a certain basis for optimism. This is evident in our modern life. The law of evolution has affected the mood of our times, and

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[57] Eccl. 1. 9.

[58] See Robert Flint's *Philosophy of History,* pp. 88ff. According to Nemesius, "the Stoics taught that in fixed periods of time a burning and destruction of all things take place, and the world returns again from the beginning into the very same shape as it had before, and that the restoration of them all happens not once but often, or, rather, that the same things are restored an infinite number of times."

[59] *The Religion of Israel Under the Kingdom,* p. 260.

has given to it a somewhat more hopeful character. But this effect has been very general and diffusive. It has led to no new movement; and for a manifest reason. The belief in progress can become dynamic only when the goal is conceived of as not very distant. During the persecution of the Jews in Russia a number of years ago, when hundreds were being slain, it was reported in the daily press that Andrew Carnegie sent them a cablegram saying, "Do not be dismayed. Under the law of evolution we must steadily, though slowly, march upward, and finally reach the true conception of the brotherhood of man." That this message brought any great degree of comfort to its recipients, is hardly probable. Before the belief in development can be translated into the living power of an optimistic faith, the goal of the development must be brought so near that it may be possible for the individual himself or at least his immediate descendants to share in it. And here it is that the strength of the prophetic hope lay. It was no distant utopia which the prophets held up before men, but an imminent kingdom of God. The new era was about to dawn. God was about to intervene. It was this nearness of the divine intervention that gave moral leverage and convicting power to the prophets' message. And it was this fact also that made it possible for them for such a long time to dispense with the belief in personal immortality. The nearness of the new age made possible the thought of personal participation in it.

The older exegesis found everywhere in the Old Testament references to Christ. A scarlet thread could hardly be mentioned without its being construed as pointing forward to the sacrifice on Calvary; and so with a thousand other details. That type of exegesis is now past.

We no longer look to the Old Testament for specific predictions concerning Jesus of Nazareth. It is the ethical teaching of the prophets, and not their outlook into the future, that interests us. And so the habit has arisen of depreciating the eschatological element in both the Old and New Testaments. "Such ideas," we are told, "by their nature belong not to the spiritual kernel of religion, but to its external dogmatic framework. From the point of view of pure religion they are among the least influential and the least interesting of religious facts." [60]

But against this tendency there has been of late a reaction. It is now coming to be seen that we do not do justice to the prophets and psalmists when we place an almost exclusive stress upon their ethical and social teaching. The ethical idealism of these ancient seers and singers was born out of and sustained by their Messianic hope. Their eschatology constituted the very atmosphere of their religious life. It was their supreme interest, the heart of their message. Hence we are coming to see that the older exegesis was not so wholly wrong after all. Its method was completely mistaken. But the instinct which led it to single out the Messianic hope as the most significant element in the Old Testament was sound. It was this hope, and this hope only, that made possible the lofty idealism of the Hebrew seer and saint. A similar change of attitude toward eschatology is also observable in the New Testament field. "We are beginning," says F. C. Burkitt, "to see that the apocalyptic vision, the New Age which God is to bring us, is no mere embroidery of Christianity, but the heart of its enthusiasm. And therefore the expectations of vindication to come, the imagery of the Messianic Feast, the 'other-worldliness' against which

[60] C. H. Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 372.

so many eloquent words were said in the nineteenth century, are not to be regarded as regrettable accretions foisted on by superstition to the pure morality of the original gospel. These ideas are the Christian hope, to be allegorized and spiritualized by us for our own use whenever necessary, but not to be given up so long as we remain Christians at all." [61]

[61] Preface to Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus.*

CHAPTER XVI

THE FUTURE LIFE

The eschatology of the individual receives far less attention in the Old Testament than that of the nation. And not only does it receive less attention. Such views as are expressed of the individual's future are for the most part very different from those to which the Christian believer has been accustomed. Not until almost the close of the Old Testament period do we find the belief in personal immortality. And even here it is no general and assured conviction that meets us. Uncertainty, skepticism, and dreary representations of the future mingle with the few expressions of confident hope. And not only does the Old Testament conception of the individual's destiny fall below that of the New Testament. It seems on the whole to be beneath the level of several of the Ethnic faiths, "less tolerable than the Greek, less ethical than the Egyptian, less adequate and certain than the Persian." [1] These Gentile religions, it is sometimes asserted, "had a more special mission than can be claimed for the Hebrew faith, in the preservation and transmission of the truth of a future life." [2] Indeed, Kant was so impressed with the lack of the Old Testament at this point that he denied to Judaism a genuinely religious character, and Schopenhauer stigmatized it, in the form in which it appears in the historical books, as "the rudest of all religions."

[1] S. D. F. Salmond, *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, p. 174.
[2] Ibid.

This singular attitude of the Old Testament toward the belief in a future life calls for explanation. The reason commonly given for it is the strong sense of solidarity that prevailed in ancient Israel. The individual was so completely subordinated to the family, tribe, and nation that he had no independent rights or worth. He found his satisfaction in the prosperity of the group to which he belonged. If the nation was believed to be immortal, nothing more was needed. The Messianic hope rendered unnecessary the belief in personal immortality. But while there is some truth in this contention, it is not an adequate reason for the comparatively negative attitude of the Old Testament toward the question of the individual's destiny. The same attitude in even a more pronounced form appears among the Babylonians and Assyrians, and in their case it could hardly be contended that the difference in this regard between them, on the one hand, and the Egyptians, on the other, was due to their more highly developed sense of solidarity. Evidently, some other explanation is necessary. And so the relatively undeveloped thought of the Hebrews and Babylonians concerning the future life has been attributed to the lack of constructive imagination on the part of the Semites.[3] The Semitic peoples had no drama and no metaphysic. They concerned themselves with the empirical and practical, and hence devoted little attention to what took place after death.

In this as well as the preceding explanation there is probably an element of truth. But both explanations have only a limited validity as applied to the Old Testament. It was not simply lack of creative imagination that led the prophets to take such a gloomy view of Sheol and the

[3] C. H. Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 383.

future life. There was another reason, as we shall see later. And as for the idea of solidarity we have already seen in a previous chapter that nationalism and individualism were not antithetical to each other. The Messianic hope did not necessarily stand in the way of the development of the belief in immortality. In one sense it rather contributed to it. "The thought of the destiny of the individual rose upon that of the nation. The hope of Israel carried with it the hope of the Israelite." [4] No doubt the expectation of the speedy coming of the kingdom of God tended to direct attention away from the thought of death and the life hereafter, but it did so in the interest of a higher conception of the Future, a conception that had its significance for the individual as well as the nation. For the nearness of the approaching kingdom made it not only possible but a matter of lively expectation that the individual Israelite would share in it, and to this extent at least the Messianic hope contained in germ the later belief in personal immortality.

Whether this belief would not have arisen sooner in Israel had not the national hope been so strong, is a question that admits of no answer. But a providential purpose may be discerned in the order of development that actually took place. The Messianic hope, imperfect as it was in its earlier forms, stressed two important truths, the value of the present life and the social character of the life in the new age. Both of these truths have at times been overlooked by believers in immortality. There has been on their part a tendency to other-worldliness, to a depreciation of the life that now is, and also a tendency to view the life hereafter in too individualistic a sense, as simply a reward for meritorious conduct. The re-

[4] S. D. F. Salmond, p. 208.

sult has been to deprive the belief in immortality of its richness and sustaining power. For, as R. L. Stevenson says, "To believe in immortality is one thing, but first of all it is needful that we believe in life." And the only life that we can permanently believe in is the social life, the life lived with and for the brethren. It was the failure of the Egyptians, the Persians, and Greeks adequately to emphasize one or the other of these truths that eventually deprived their belief in the life hereafter of its vitality. And so it turned out that the Hebrew religion, which seemed far cruder and more negative in its view of the Future than these heathen faiths, but which did emphasize the value of life as such and its social character, "proved nevertheless to be the only religion that moved on to a vital and enduring faith in immortality." [5]

In tracing the development of Old Testament teaching concerning the future life we naturally begin with the conception of Sheol. The word "Sheol" was probably derived from a root meaning "to be hollow," and so corresponded in meaning to the German *Hölle* and the English "hell." The representations of Sheol in the Old Testament are not altogether uniform, but in general it was thought of as a great subterranean pit or cave to which all the dead went.[6] The origin of this conception is a matter of uncertainty. L. B. Paton argues that it was of Sumerian origin, and that it was early adopted by the Canaanites and from them by the Hebrews.[7] It

[5] S. D. F. Salmond, p. 181.

[6] Compare Num. 16. 30, 33.

[7] "The Hebrew Idea of the Future Life," in *The Biblical World*, 1910, vol. i, pp. 159ff.

was thus independent of the general Semitic belief that the dead haunted their graves and were possessed of certain magical powers which led men to treat them as objects of worship. But the more common and probable theory is that "Sheol was originally conceived as a combination of the graves of the clan or nation, and as thus its final abode. In due course this conception was naturally extended till it embraced the departed of all nations, and thus became the final abode of all mankind, good and bad alike." [8] That the idea, however, underwent this development within Israel itself is improbable. The conception of a general rendezvous of the dead is a very ancient one, and was probably borrowed or inherited by the Hebrews. Their Sheol was quite similar to the Aralu of the Babylonians, and may very well have been derived from it, or from an earlier common source.

But while the conception of Sheol may have originally developed out of the more primitive idea of the tomb as the abode of the dead, the latter idea was not displaced by it. The two continued to exist together. This is the case throughout practically the whole of the Old Testament. The dead are represented both as gathered to their fathers in the family grave and as going down into Sheol. Strictly taken, these two conceptions were mutually exclusive, but in popular thought and speech this was overlooked. The tendency was to confuse the two and treat them as interchangeable.[9] The result was that the old cult of the dead persisted along with the belief in Sheol.

That ancestor worship had a strong hold upon the Israelites is evident from many facts. We read fre-

[8] R. H. Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 34.

[9] Compare Isa. 14. 11.

quently in the Old Testament of offerings to the dead.[10] The bread of mourning was such an offering,[11] and so probably was the hair cut off by mourners.[12] Furthermore, "such Hebrew graves as have been found in Palestine contain deposits similar to those found in Canaanite graves (and indeed in the graves of all neighboring nations)—food, drink, arms, tools, and the like."[13] The mourning customs also, such as cutting into one's flesh[14] and removing one's shoes,[15] point to religious reverence for the dead. Such reverence is likewise implied in the invocation or consultation of the spirits of the dead to which repeated references are made in the Old Testament.[16] It is from this point of view also that the importance of posterity among the Israelites is best understood. The cult of the dead was in the hands of one's sons. If it was not observed, the dead would lose whatever life and joy would otherwise be their lot in the hereafter. It was consequently a matter of prime importance to the Israelite to have male offspring, or at least some one who by adoption or otherwise would perform the religious offices of a son after one's death.[17] The law of *levirate marriage,* according to which it was the duty of a surviving brother to marry the childless widow of his deceased brother,[18] owed its origin to this fact. And the same fact also explains the belief that

[10] Deut. 26. 14; Jer. 16. 7; Psa. 106. 28.
[11] Hos. 9. 4; Ezek. 24. 17.
[12] Isa. 22. 12; Jer. 7. 29; Amos 8. 10.
[13] J. P. Peters, *The Religion of the Hebrews,* p. 450.
[14] Lev. 19. 28; 21. 5.
[15] 2 Sam. 15. 30; Ezek. 24. 17.
[16] 1 Sam. 28; Isa. 8. 19; Deut. 18. 11.
[17] Compare 2 Sam. 18. 18.
[18] Deut. 25. 5-10.

"even in the after-life men could be punished by Yahweh through the destruction of their posterity,[19] for with the destruction of the latter sacrifices ceased to be made to the former." [20]

In the light of such facts as these it is clear that the cult of the dead and necromancy played no inconsiderable role in the popular religion of Israel. But they did so in defiance of the national religion. From the very beginning Yahwism seems to have assumed a hostile attitude toward ancestor-worship and everything associated with it. Saul is reported to have "put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land." [21] And the later prophets and lawgivers condemn in the most pronounced way the necromancers "that chirp and that mutter." "Should not," asks Isaiah, "a people seek unto their God? on behalf of the living *should they seek* unto the dead?" [22] Between the worship of Yahweh and the cult of the dead there was a distinct antithesis. Yahweh was a jealous God and would tolerate no rivals, not even the spirits of the dead. Everything connected with ancestor-worship was looked upon as idolatrous.[23]

This was undoubtedly one reason why the early prophets devoted so little attention to the after-life. That realm had already been appropriated by other and rival objects of worship. The dead themselves were looked upon as divine or semidivine.[24] Then, too, the current

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[19] Exod. 20. 5; 34. 7; Num. 14. 18; Deut. 5. 9.

[20] Compare Job 21. 19-21. R. H. Charles, *Eschatology,* pp. 25f. See Schwally, *Das Leben nach dem Tode,* pp. 30f.

[21] 1 Sam. 28. 3.

[22] Isa. 8. 19; compare Deut. 18. 11; Lev. 19. 31; 20. 6, 27.

[23] See *Die israelitischen Vorstellungen vom Zustand nach dem Tode,* (pp. 38ff.), by Alfred Bertholet.

[24] 1 Sam. 28. 13.

conception of Sheol was hardly such as to suggest that it belonged to the domain of Yahweh. Yahweh was the God of the living, not of the dead. This, however, does not necessarily mean that he was so exclusively a national God and so completely limited in his sway to the land and the people of Israel that he had no interest or power over the underworld. The first of the literary prophets represents him as having Sheol within his reach,[25] and the manifest conviction of the religious leaders of Israel throughout their entire history was that Yahweh was equal to every emergency. Wherever his people might be, he was able to protect them. What kept him from taking Sheol under his special care was not its location but its character. It was not beyond the reach of his power, but life there was so shadowy and so unethical that it seemed unworthy of his direct supervision.

Yahwism consequently assumed a negative attitude toward the future life. It did not altogether deny the existence of Sheol, but it tended to take a very low and pessimistic view of everything connected with it. And so there arose in Israel two different representations of the underworld. According to the earlier and popular view, the dead were possessed of a certain degree of life, of knowledge, and of power. They were self-conscious, moved about, and could even be brought back to earth.[26] They were acquainted with the fortunes of their living descendants, were interested in them, and were able to help or injure them.[27] They had supernatural knowledge, could forecast the future;[28] indeed, were called *yid-*

[25] Amos 9. 2.
[26] Isa. 14. 9ff.; 1 Sam. 28.
[27] Jer. 31. 15f.
[28] 1 Sam. 28.

deonim, "the knowing ones," [29] and were spoken of as *elohim,* "divine." The term *Rephaim* applied to them[30] is commonly interpreted as referring to their weakness, describing them as "sunken, powerless ones," but it should be noted that the same term is applied to "the vanished races, who had left colossal remains behind them, evidences of their more than normal human powers";[31] and it is possible that it may have been used in this sense also of the spirits of the dead.

But in spite of their superhuman powers the lot of those in Sheol was at the best a miserable one. The Israelites looked forward to it with unconcealed dread. Almost any kind of earthly existence was to be preferred to it. Only one condition was worse, and that was the state of those who were unburied and so not admitted to Sheol, or at least not to an honorable place in it.[32] Whether there were distinctions of lot in Sheol is a question. There are a few passages that speak of "the lowest Sheol," [33] "the chambers of death," [34] and "the uttermost parts of the pit," [35] but whether these expressions are to be interpreted literally is uncertain. In any case the distinctions in Sheol, if such there were, were not based on ethical grounds. "Here," as J. P. Peters puts it, "the dead rested in their places, according to the character not of their deeds but of their graves." The social differences of the present life were carried over into Sheol[36]

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[29] Lev. 19. 31; 20. 6; Isa. 19. 3.
[30] Isa. 14. 9; 26. 19; Psa. 88. 10; Job 26. 5.
[31] J. P. Peters, *Religion of the Hebrews,* p. 449.
[32] Isa. 14. 18-20; Jer. 22. 19; 25. 33.
[33] Deut. 32. 22.
[34] Prov. 7. 27.
[35] Isa. 14. 15; Ezek. 32. 23f.; compare Isa. 24. 21f.
[36] 1 Sam. 28. 14; Isa. 14. 9ff.; Ezek. 32.

but the ethical distinctions vanished.[37] Life there was submoral, and in its misery and emptiness subhuman.

But uninviting as Sheol was from the popular point of view, there is another and darker representation of it in the Old Testament. According to this representation, Sheol was a land of forgetfulness.[38] It was called Abaddon, "destruction." [39] It was synonymous with silence.[40] From it there was no return,[41] and in it there was "no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom." [42] The dead had no consciousness of themselves and no knowledge of others.[43] They had no interest in their living descendants and no acquaintance with their affairs.[44] Life to them was a blank nothingness. Everything connected with it had ceased except bare existence. Indeed, there are passages that seem to assert man's complete extinction at death. The psalmist says,

> "Oh spare me that I may receive strength,
> Before I go hence and be no more." [45]

And Job says,

> "Now shall I lie down in the dust;
> And thou shalt seek me diligently, but I shall not be. . . .
> Man dieth, and is laid low;
> Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?
> *As* the waters fail from the sea,
> And the river wasteth and drieth up;
> So man lieth down, and riseth not." [46]

[37] 1 Sam. 28. 19; Job. 3. 13-19.
[38] Psa. 88. 12.
[39] Psa. 88. 11; Job 26. 6; 28. 22.
[40] Psa. 115. 17.
[41] Job 7. 9; 14. 12.
[42] Eccl. 9. 10.
[43] Eccl. 9. 5f.
[44] Job 21. 21; 14. 21.
[45] Psa. 39. 13.
[46] Job 7. 21; 14. 10-12.

Such passages as these are perhaps not to be taken in strict literalness. They may be expressions of a passing mood rather than final reasoned convictions. Still it would not have been strange, had the belief in the utter worthlessness of the after-life led some Old Testament saints at least to a complete denial of it.

R. H. Charles derives the more negative view of Sheol from what he terms "the monotheistic doctrine of man's nature" in Gen. 2-3. A strict trichotomy, he holds, is here taught. Man is composed of three elements—spirit, soul, and body. The spirit is the impersonal basis of life. It came from God and returns at death to God.[47] The soul, which constitutes the personal factor in man, is the "result of the indwelling of the spirit in the material body, and has no independent existence of its own. It is really a function of the material body when quickened by the spirit."[48] It, consequently, follows that when spirit and body are separated at death, the soul ceases to exist, and the individual personality vanishes altogether.

But it is very doubtful if any such clearly defined theory of man's nature underlay the narrative in Gen. 2-3; and in any case there is no evidence that the more negative view of Sheol just described was a logical deduction from it. The best explanation of this view of Sheol is the one already suggested. It had its origin in the prophetic opposition to ancestor-worship and to the crude, superstitious, and idolatrous ideas and practices associated with it. The current view of the life hereafter was too shadowy and too unethical to commend itself to the true worshiper of Yahweh. Yahweh was a stern ethical Deity, a Being who manifested himself here and now in the

[47] Eccl. 12. 7.

[48] *Eschatology*, p. 42.

affairs of men, a God of history so real that the realm of the dead, as men then understood it, seemed foreign to him. Hence the Old Testament saints turned away from the life hereafter. As currently believed in, it was empty enough; but in the light of Yahweh's revelation of himself it was still more barren. It was the very reverse of all that he stood for; and so the prophets used its emptiness and nothingness as a foil to set off the richness of the present manifestations of the divine grace and power.

To us this seems strange; not to believe in the future life seems almost equivalent to the denial of religion. But with the ancient prophets almost the reverse was the case. "Not from want of religion," says Dean Stanley, "but (if one might use the expression) from excess of religion, was this void left in the Jewish mind. The Future Life was not denied or contradicted; but it was overlooked, set aside, overshadowed, by the consciousness of the living, actual presence of God himself. That truth, at least in the limited conceptions of the youthful nation, was too vast to admit of any rival truth, however precious." [49]

This negative attitude, however, of early Yahwism to the question of the future life represented only a transitional stage. With the development of Old Testament religion it was inevitable that the problem of the individual's destiny should be seriously raised. And it was equally inevitable, if the needs of the human spirit were to be met, that a more positive attitude toward the subject should be taken. Not only must the reality of the future life be affirmed; there must also be a strong conviction that it is a life of moral distinctions, and that to the righteous it is one of eternal blessedness. In the development of

[49] *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church*, vol. i, pp. 173f.

this view three lines might have been followed by the Hebrews; indeed, have been followed by the human spirit. The first is the resurrection of the body. This means the resumption of the earthly life. The second is the idea of a judgment in the underworld. This deprives the after-life of its moral neutrality, and gives to it the same interests and values that the present life possesses. The third is the immortality of the soul. This doctrine establishes a kinship between the human and the Divine, and finds in that kinship a ground for the belief in the endless existence of the soul. These three lines of thought were first worked out by the Persians, Egyptians, and Greeks respectively. And all three exercised a considerable influence on the development of the belief in immortality.

Among the Jews the idea of immortality took the form of the resurrection of the body. The process by which this conclusion was reached was a long and complex one. In seeking to trace it we first note that it took its rise within Yahwism itself. It did not grow out of the popular belief in Sheol. Toward this belief the prophets, as we have seen, took a negative attitude. They were either indifferent to it, or directly condemned the necromancy and cult of the dead connected with it. But while the popular heathen conception did not form the starting point of the later belief in personal immortality, it was still not without its positive value. Superstitious and idolatrous though it was, it had accustomed the popular mind to the thought of existence after death, and in so far had prepared the way for the later and higher faith. Like Spiritualism, Theosophy, Christian Science, and New Thought in recent times, it furnished a kind of intellectual or psychological support to the true religious doctrine

of the future life, and in this way contributed to its development. Had there been no popular belief in an afterlife, had the Israelites been materialistic in their thought and looked upon death as the end of all, it is certain that the later religious doctrine would have had greater difficulties to contend with, and been still slower than it was in finding lodgment in their minds.

Within Yahwism itself there were three native lines of thought, or developments, that led to the doctrine of immortality: first, the rise of individualism; second, the idea of retribution; and third, the sense of fellowship with God. These three factors were to some extent interrelated; but it will be well to consider them, so far as possible, separately.

We have already discussed at some length the development of individualism. Here we need only point out the way in which the Messianic hope was affected by it. This hope down to the time of the exile made a certain provision for the inevitable longings of the individual for a larger and fuller life, but it did not promise him immortality. Long life would no doubt be his lot, but for final and ultimate satisfaction he was forced to turn to the thought of the abiding glory of the nation. This conception, however, could not be permanently satisfactory. The individual, as he grew in importance, demanded something more, and so we read in a postexilic prophecy[50] that there is to be in the new age a miraculous prolongation of human life. "As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands." But this also failed to meet the growing demands of the individual heart. So in a still later prophecy, or, rather, apocalypse we are told that

[50] Isa. 65. 20-22.

death itself is to have no place in the new kingdom. "He hath swallowed up death forever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces." [51]

But immortality in the Messianic age, comforting as the hope no doubt was, did not solve the problem of life and destiny. Many would certainly not live until the new age dawned and so would have no share in the immortal life then granted men. Then, too, the repeated delays in the coming of the new era made it necessarily doubtful whether the Messianic utterances of the prophets were not, after all, intended "for many days to come" and for "times that are far off." [52] And if so, there was little in the Messianic hope that could give comfort to the present generation. Hence we find the idea of immortality attaching itself to the second line of thought above mentioned, the idea of retribution.

It is in the book of Job, "our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem, man's destiny and God's ways with man here in the earth," [53] that these two ideas are brought together. It is here assumed that retribution is a principle of the divine government, but it is strenuously contended that the principle is not equitably applied in the actual experiences of life. The innocent often suffer, while the wicked prosper. This fact with Job was not only a matter of observation, it was a testimony of his own conscience. Though innocent he was sorely afflicted. Tradition, he knew, interpreted his sufferings as an evidence of guilt; and even God himself, he believed, regarded him as a sinner. Otherwise he would not have brought such suffering upon him. Nevertheless, in the

[51] Isa. 25. 8.

[52] Ezek. 12. 27.

[53] Thomas Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, p. 68.

face of the clear indications of Providence and in the face of the united voice of the past he protested his innocence. The inner voice of conscience was to him more trustworthy than any external or objective standard of truth. He knew from his own experience that the law of retribution was not justly applied in his case. And yet he was not prepared to reject the law. He could not do so without wrecking the moral universe itself. The law must, therefore, somehow be valid. But how to harmonize it with his own experience was beyond him. The problem baffled him.

If there was to be a solution, it must lie beyond the experiences of the present; and so in the stress and agony of his own soul Job turned to the thought of the possibility of another life. "If a man die, shall he live again?" he asks. If this were only so,

> "All the days of my warfare would I wait,
> Till my release should come." [54]

Sheol, it is here suggested, may perhaps be only a temporary place of sojourn, from which the righteous will return again to life. But the suggestion gave only a momentary gleam of light to the sufferer. His mind seemed unable to rest in it. And yet there must be some escape from the intolerable moral situation in which he found himself. So he turned to the God of his own ideal, and pleaded with him for vindication as over against the God of traditional theology.

> "Mine eye poureth out tears unto God,
> That he would maintain the right of a man with God." [55]

[54] Job 14. 14.
[55] 16. 20f.

What Job here had in mind was probably vindication, not in this life, but after death. And a little later this thought passed from a mere prayer to at least a temporary conviction. He says:

"I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And at last he will stand up upon the earth:
And after my skin, *even* this *body,* is destroyed,
Then without my flesh shall I see God;
Whom I, even I, shall see, on my side,
And mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger." [56]

The text of this important passage is unfortunately so corrupt that its interpretation in detail is uncertain and difficult. But the main idea is clear. Job looked forward to a vindication of himself after death, a vindication of which he himself would be conscious. This did not necessarily imply immortality. A temporary vision of God after death would meet the demands of the text. But the significant thing is that Job felt himself driven by the moral antinomies of life to the assertion of a conscious existence after death. And even though he was unable permanently to maintain for himself this high level of conviction, he nevertheless in the above passage pointed out the path along which the higher thought in Israel must needs travel. A profound ethical sense such as characterized the Hebrew religion from the beginning leads necessarily by an inner logic of its own to the belief in an after-life.

But more directly than the growing individualism and the intensified idea of retribution did the deepening sense

[56] 19. 25-27.

of fellowship with God contribute to the rise of the belief in a blessed future life. What the Old Testament saint most dreaded as he contemplated existence in Sheol was the absence there of all communion with God. The psalmist, for instance, says:

> "In death there is no remembrance of thee:
> In Sheol who shall give thee thanks?" [57]

What gave value to life from the Old Testament point of view was the consciousness of the presence of God; and it was the removal of his presence that made death a special object of dread, and gave to it the character of a divine judgment.

According to one method of representation in the Old Testament, and this the more common one, death is viewed simply as a fact of the natural order. It is the inevitable outcome of physical existence. Dust we are, and to dust we must return. Premature death is an evil, and may be a divine judgment. But death after a long life is part of the divine plan. It has in and of itself no religious significance. Along with this empirical view, however, there is another in the Old Testament, that sees in death a departure from the ideal. In the original plan of God death had no place. Man was made for life, for endless life with God; but the divine plan was defeated by human disobedience, and death was introduced as a penalty.

The latter view is clearly expressed in the story of the tree of life in Genesis 2-3. It may be that in the original J narrative there was no reference to the tree of life, and that in 3. 19 death is not to be regarded as a part of the penalty imposed on man. But even so, it can hardly be

[57] 6. 5.

questioned that the tree of life embodied an early Israelitic conception, and that death, whether viewed as a penalty or not, is in the present narrative represented as actually due to expulsion from the garden of Eden. The same idea of man as originally intended for an immortal destiny is also suggested by the statement that he was made in the image of God.[58] If like God, it would seem that he ought to share in the eternal life of God. And in the case of two early Old Testament heroes it is explicitly asserted that they escaped death. Enoch was not, for God took him,[59] and Elijah was carried aloft in a chariot of fire.[60] It is a common remark that these stories had no significance for the belief in a future life, because both Enoch and Elijah were wholly exceptional men, perhaps "depotentiated deities." And it is, of course, true that no general doctrine of immortality can be inferred from their experiences. But what is recorded of them must at least have suggested to the Hebrews the possibility of escaping death and the thought that the life to come was dependent upon a present life of communion with God. But suggestive and significant as these early passages in the Old Testament are to us, they led to no important theological development.

Not until we come to some of the late psalms do we find the sense of fellowship with God drawing the inevitable conclusion to which it itself furnished the premises. If God be a God of the living, and not of the dead, if the maintenance of conscious life be the chief end of creation, if communion with God be the supreme good of life, then it must needs be that this communion will not

[58] Gen. 1. 26f., P.
[59] Gen. 5. 22-24, P.
[60] 2 Kings 2. 11.

be terminated by death, but will be as endless as God himself. To suppose otherwise would be to think of God either as weaker than his works, less powerful than Sheol, or as himself defeating the very purpose of creation. Neither alternative is possible to faith. There must, therefore, somehow be deliverance from death. Life with God must be without end.

There are four psalms in which this thought seems to be expressed, and which are consequently called psalms of immortality: the sixteenth, seventeenth, forty-ninth, and seventy-third. The first two, however, are less definite in their teaching on the subject than the last two. The expression, "when I awake," in Psa. 17. 15 has been interpreted as meaning an awakening from the sleep of death, and the statement about beholding the "face" or "form" of God has been construed as a reference to the beatific vision that follows the awakening. But the context is unfavorable to this interpretation. What is here contrasted is not the present and the future life, but "an unreal and fugitive good apart from God, and a real and enduring good in his fellowship." And this is also the standpoint of Psalm 16. So secure does the author feel in the consciousness of the divine presence that he has no fear even of death. He says:

> "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol,
> Neither wilt thou suffer thy godly one to see
> corruption" (verse 10).

Nothing is here said about a life after death. The psalmist is simply so enraptured by the presence of God that he feels himself lifted above the thought of death. The fact of death is not denied, but it is overlooked, transcended. This attitude falls short of the full belief in

the future life, but it nevertheless marked an important advance. The idea of immortality is implicit, though not explicit.

The situation, however, in Psalms 49 and 73 is different. Here we have definite statements relative to the after-life. In Psalm 49 the fate of the wicked and the righteous is contrasted. Sheol is to be the future abode of the wicked.

> "They are appointed as a flock for Sheol;
> Death shall be their shepherd: . . .
> And their beauty shall be for Sheol to consume,
> That there be no habitation for it" (verse 14).

The righteous, on the other hand, are to dwell in heaven. "God," says the psalmist, "will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol; for he will take me," as he took Enoch of old (verse 15). And so in Psalm 73, after speaking of the certain destruction which awaits the wicked, the author turns to the thought of his own fellowship with God. Nothing is to be compared with it in value, not even the universe itself:

> "Whom have I in heaven *but thee?*
> And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee" (verse 25).

Such perfect communion with God manifestly could not brook the thought of its own cessation. Hence we read,

> "Thou shall guide me with thy counsel,
> And afterward receive me to glory" (verse 24).

In Psalms 49 and 73 the thought evidently is that the righteous at death are taken to heaven, while the wicked

remain in Sheol. Sheol is thus given a moral character, becoming a place of punishment. Heaven, on the other hand, as the home of God, becomes the eternal reward of the righteous. But rich as the thought of the divine abode was, it did not fully satisfy the demands of the Israelitic mind. Something more definite, more tangible was needed. The idea of the soul as living apart from the body was one to which the Old Testament writers did not attain. Not even in Sheol was the soul thought of as body-less. The departed in Sheol are represented as having bodily forms,[61] and these bodily forms were apparently conceived as connected in some way with the bodies in the grave.[62] In one instance it is possible that the idea is expressed that the soul is "capable of the highest spiritual activities though without the body." Job says, "without my flesh shall I see God."[63] R. H. Charles makes much of these words, contending that they show that "it was not necessary for Israel to borrow from Greece the idea that the soul could preserve its powers independently of the body." But unfortunately the Hebrew text of this passage is too uncertain to be accepted as an adequate basis for so important a conclusion. In any case, the idea was an exceptional one in Israel. The people generally seemed incapable of conceiving "the body without psychical functions, or the soul without a certain corporeity." In order, consequently, to give to the future life definiteness and richness of content it was necessary for them to do something more than believe in the immortality of the soul. They must give to the soul bodily form.

[61] Isa. 14. 9ff.
[62] Job 14. 22; Isa. 66. 24.
[63] 19. 26.

This incapacity to conceive of the soul apart from the body was one reason for the rise of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Another reason is found in the Messianic hope. This hope was an earthly hope. The kingdom to which it looked forward was to be realized on earth. And it was a hope that was older than the belief in individual immortality. It had laid firm hold upon the national consciousness, and could not be set aside. The highest thoughts of the Israelites centered about it. If, then, the idea of personal immortality was really to grip the thought of the people and become a living faith, it must somehow be connected with the belief in the coming kingdom of God. Now this was made possible by the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. The righteous who died before the dawn of the new era were to be raised from the dead so as to share in its blessings.

There are two passages in the Old Testament where this belief is expressed. The first is Isa. 26. 19. Here restored Israel, addressing Yahweh, says, "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise"; and then, turning to her own dead children, she cries, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead." Whether the dead here included all the Israelites or simply the righteous, is a question. Probably the latter. The author would hardly have represented the idolatrous Israelites as being raised from the dead to share in the glories of the Messianic age. For them and the wicked generally he evidently had in mind a different fate.[64] The other passage is Dan. 12. 2. Here we have a double resurrection. "Many," we read, "of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to

[64] See 26. 14; 24. 22.

shame and everlasting contempt." Whether the "many" here spoken of refers to all the Israelites by way of "comparison with the still more innumerable heathen" (Ewald), or simply to "the preeminently good and bad in Israel" (Charles), that is, the martyrs and apostates, is uncertain. The latter is suggested by the immediate context.[65] But in either case what we have is not a general resurrection, but a resurrection merely of Israelites.

The idea that the wicked as well as the righteous were to be raised introduced into the thought of the resurrection a new motive. What underlay the idea of the resurrection of the righteous was the thought of restoration to communion with God and with the righteous community. This is the positive religious conception that lies at the basis of the doctrine as a whole. But to this the resurrection of the wicked adds the idea of the retributive righteousness of God. The wicked were to be raised in order to be punished. This implies that Sheol was thought of in the old colorless way as a region where there was neither reward nor punishment. The assumption, on the other hand, that only the righteous were raised, implied that Sheol, while the temporary abode of the righteous, was the eternal abode of the wicked, and so relatively at least a place of punishment.

The two Old Testament passages which we have just considered belong to a late date. Daniel comes from the Maccabean period, and the apocalypse in Isa. 24-27 was probably not more than a century earlier. The late appearance of the doctrine of the resurrection in Israel naturally suggests the theory that the doctrine was borrowed from the Persians, with whom it originated earlier, and with whom the Jews had been in constant contact since

[65] See 11. 33ff.; 12. 3.

the latter part of the sixth century. In favor of this theory not a little can be said. The resemblances between the Mazdean and the Jewish doctrine, especially in the form represented by Dan. 12. 2, are manifest. Both teach a resurrection of the wicked as well as the righteous, and both connect it with the final Judgment. But along with these resemblances there are a number of points of difference. In one the resurrection is universal, in the other limited; in one the Judgment follows the Messianic era, in the other it precedes it; in one the departed go to their reward or punishment, heaven or hell, immediately after death, in the other they are all detained together in Sheol until the new era dawns.

Then, too, we have already seen that there were native tendencies in Israel naturally leading to the doctrine of individual immortality and the resurrection of the body. The growing individualism, the strict idea of divine retribution, and the deepening sense of fellowship with God all made it inevitable that immortal life should eventually be predicated of the individual. And the strength of the Messianic idea in Israel made it equally inevitable that the immortal hope should take the form of the belief in the resurrection of the body. This idea was not new to the Israelites. The prophets, Elijah and Elisha, had raised the dead,[66] and later prophets had applied the idea of the resurrection to the nation.[67] Hence its subsequent application to individual Israelites generally was only natural. No suggestion of it from a foreign source was necessary. This, of course, does not mean that the Jews were altogether uninfluenced by their Persian environment. To some extent they must have been affected by

[66] 1 Kings 17. 22; 2 Kings 4. 35; 13. 21.

[67] Ezek. 37. 1-14; Isa. 53. 10-12.

it. But, so far at least as the doctrine of the resurrection is concerned, there is no good ground for going beyond the position taken by Kuenen, who held that "the germs which lay hidden in Judaism were fertilized by contact with a religion in which they had arrived at maturity." [68]

In the development of the idea of immortality in the Old Testament we have observed three stages. The first asserted immortality for the individual in the Messianic age. Death would then be abolished. In the second the pious soul expressed the conviction that his communion with God would be without end. The third announced the doctrine of the resurrection. The dead would be raised to share in the glories of the Messianic kingdom. Two different conceptions thus became current concerning the fate of the individual at death. According to one he went directly to heaven and continued there an unbroken fellowship with God. According to the other he descended to Sheol and remained there until the resurrection day, when he was restored to communion with God and men.

In both of these forms the new hope met with more or less of skepticism, as we see from such a book as Ecclesiastes,[69] and from the unbelief of the Sadducees. But it nevertheless continued to make its way until it became a firmly established article of the popular faith. Both forms of the belief persisted into the postcanonical period. Indeed, they both appear in the New Testament.[70] But there was a gradual tendency to adjust the one to the other. Sheol, for instance, came to be thought of as a

[68] *The Religion of Israel,* vol. iii, p. 43.
[69] See 2. 15f.; 3. 19-21; 6. 3-6; 9. 2-6; 11. 8.
[70] Compare Luke 23. 43 and Mark 12. 18ff.

place of moral distinctions. The dead are no longer indiscriminately mingled together. "A division," we read in the Book of Enoch,[71] "is made for the spirits of the righteous, in which is a bright spring of water." A foretaste of the bliss of heaven is thus transferred to the righteous in Sheol. Then, too, the resurrection and the Messianic age came to be thought of in less distinctly earthly or material terms. The resurrection was to be either a resurrection of the spirit or a resurrection "in garments of light and glory." And the earthly Messianic kingdom, if established at all, was not to be eternal. The dead were not to be raised to participate in it. It was to be only preparatory to the general resurrection, which was to usher in the heavenly kingdom or an eternal Messianic kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth. A more spiritual conception of the future life thus came to prevail.

But not until the advent of Christianity did this higher hope become a living and burning faith. Stripped of its national limitations, it now became a universal hope, the hope of every man as man. It also, when linked up with the established fact of the resurrection of Christ and the thought of eternal fellowship with him, carried with it a certainty of conviction and a richness of content that were altogether new. In a very real sense Christ brought life and immortality to light; so that it was possible for the believer to say that while "it is not yet made manifest what we shall be, we know that, when he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is." [72]

[71] 22. 9.

[72] 1 John 3. 2.

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